THE SINNERS Last Sentence TO Eternal Punishment, FOR SINS of OMISSION.

Wherein is discovered,

The { Nature, Causes, and Cure

Of those Sins.

By *Geo. Swinnock*, M.A.

Deut. 32. 29. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.*

Heb. 2. 3. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation?* &c.

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XU

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

CHARLES

Earl of Carnarvon, *Lord* Dormer, *Viſcount* Aſcot, *Baron of* Wing, &c.

May it pleaſe your Lordſhip,

FOr ſo mean a thing as I am to addreſs my ſelf to a Perſonage of your *Honour* and *Quality*, may cauſe wonder in *others*, and abaſhment in *my ſelf*: But for ſome Conſiderations, which may

give *them* ſatisfaction, and *me* boldneſs, and encouragement.

What I now preſent your Honour, is a poor *Widows mite*; ſuch as, being caſt into the Treaſury of Gods Temple, may contribute ſomething to repair the breaches of collapſed Piety, and ſuch as, I hope, the Lord of Lords will not deſpiſe.

Do I call it *Mine?* (I muſt correct my ſelf) it is indeed *your Honours*, and my tendring it to your acceptance, is but my paying you your own: It is a *Legacy* left you by my dear deceaſed *Husband*, who commanded me on his death-bed in all humble wiſe to preſent it to your Honour, and publiſh it under your Protection: So that although it was left *with* me, it was left by him *for* your Honour.

Do

Do I call it a *Legacy?* (I muſt again correct, and confeſs) It is a *due Debt:* For our poor Family ſtands moſt deeply obliged to your Honour, who have been pleaſed to exerciſe a *generous bounty* towards us, and ſuch as is ſuitable to none but a *noble mind.*

The *Debt* is humbly *acknowledged by us*, and ſhall be undoubtedly *repaid by the Lord*, to whom it was *lent:* Your Lordſhip may with comfort read the *Specialty* in Gods own *Word*, which is very *good ſecurity.* But as for *us*, alas! what have *we* to return? except theſe gleanings of the Fruits of my dear Husbands Labours, even ſome of thoſe, which were brought forth, when he laſt laboured in the Lords Vineyard. Prov. 19. 17.

I deſire for ever to adore the goodneſs of God towards me, whoſe

weak condition seemed to cry like that *woman of the wives of the Sons of the Prophets, unto* Elisha, *saying, Thy Servant my Husband is dead, and thou knowest, that thy Servant did fear the Lord*, &c. 2 *Kings* 4. 1. To which Cry, your Lordships overflowing munificence hath answered very like the Man of God, *vers.* 7. *Go, and sell the Oyl, and pay thy Debt, and live thou, and thy Children, of the rest.*

As for the *matter* of this Discourse, it is not proper for me to reflect thereon. Only I have a good confidence, That, as your Honour hath been pleased to cast a favourable Eye on *other* of my Husbands Works, professing profit and pleasure in the reading of them; So *these* words of your *dying Servant* will not be unsuccessful, but have the

like

Good Reader,

BEing requested to recommend this Treatise to thy acceptance, I readily complyed with the motion, induced thereunto partly by my respect to the Author Mr. Swinnock, a Name well known to most serious Christians, by his former savoury and useful Works, published for the good of the Church, before one of which I have expressed my just esteem of his Gifts and Graces in an Epistle prefixed, and therefore commendation is not my business now (it needeth not), but attestation; and to assure thee, that this piece is his, delivered by his own hands, to his Son, a little before his, to him blessed, but (alas) to us untimely death,* and accordingly thou wilt

* He died Nov. 6. 1673. in the 46th year of his Age.

wilt find the one ſpirit *of the Author in it, and the ſame* holy, lively *way of diſcourſing, which is ſo remarkable in his other Writings, partly* with reſpect to the matter, *which is about the* eternal recompences, *as they are repreſented by our Lord in a* Scheme *or* Draught *of the* laſt Judgment. *We are hedged within the compaſs of our Duty both on the* right hand, *and on the* left; *on the right hand, with the* hopes of a moſt bleſſed everlaſting Eſtate; *on the left, with the* fears of endleſs and never-ceaſing Torments: *Reflections on the former are* comfortable; *what is ſweeter than to live in the* expectation *and* fore-ſight *of endleſs Glory? But the* conſideration *of the latter is alſo* profitable. *We need many Sermons about Hell, to keep us out of Hell; therefore in this* Treatiſe

tiſe *the worthy Author inſiſteth on the* dreadful Doom *and* Sentence *that ſhall paſs on the Wicked at the laſt day.*

There is alſo another thing largely repreſented which is of great uſe, the hainouſneſs of Sins of Omiſſion. *Sin in the general is* a tranſgreſſion of the Law, 1 *Joh.* 3.4. *Now the Law may be tranſgreſſed either by* omitting *what is* commanded *as a Duty to God, or by* committing *what is forbidden, when we directly tranſgreſs an* affirmative Precept, *that is a ſin of* Omiſſion; *but when we do any thing againſt a* negative Precept, *that is a ſin of* Commiſſion; *in both there is* Diſobedience, *and ſo by conſequence* contempt of Gods Authority. *When* Saul *had not done what God bids him to do, he telleth him,* That Rebellion is as a ſin of Witchcraft,

craft, and ſtubbornneſs as Idolatry, 1 *Sam.* 15. 13. *Implying, that* Omiſſion *to be* Rebellion *and* Stubbornneſs, *for which God would rend the Kingdom from him: So for a* ſin of Omiſſion *he put by* Eli's *Family from the Prieſthood*, 1 Sam. 3. 13. I will judge his Houſe for ever, becauſe his Sons had made themſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not. *Now the* more neceſſary *the Duties omitted are, the greater is the ſin,* as Heb. 2. 3. *eſpecially if the Omiſſion be* total, Pſal. 14. 3. Jer. 2. 32. *Or when the Duty is* moſt ſeaſonable, Prov. 17. 16. *Or the* performance eaſie; *for this is to ſtand with God for a trifle, he is denied* a drop *that would not give* a crum, Luke 16. 24. *Or when we are* fully convinced *that it is our Duty*, James 4. 17. *Briefly theſe ſins of Omiſſion are the ruine*

of

of most people in the World; *yea, the* Children of God *oftner offend in these kind of Sins, than in* fowler exceſſes. *Oh how many of them go out of the World bewailing their* neglects *and* omiſſions; *the beſt might have done much more for God than ever they have yet done. But I detain thee too long from the* Book its ſelf; *read and peruſe it*, and the Lord give thee underſtanding in all things. I am

Thine in all Chriſtian Obſervation,

Tho. Manton, *D.D.*

LUKE

MATTH. 25. 41, 42.

Then ſhall he ſay alſo unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink.

CHAP. I.

The Preface and Introduction to the Text.

THough the Wiſe God is pleaſed now and then to keep a Peti-Seſſions at this day, and to execute Vengeance on ſome Sinners, leſt men ſhould queſtion his Providence, and but on ſome, leſt they ſhould queſtion his Patience; Yet the

Great Aſſize, when Juſtice ſhall have a ſolemn, publick and general Triumph, will be the laſt Day. This World is the Theatre whereon Mercy is acting its part every moment; if Juſtice peep out a little, as the Sun out of a Cloud, it is quickly recall'd and hidden again, it will not appear in its full beauty, and glory, and brightneſs, till all Nations appear in the other World. *Here all things come alike to all, there is one event to the Righteous and to the Wicked, to the Clean and to the Unclean, to him that ſweareth, and to him that feareth an Oath,* Eccleſ. 9. 2. The Sun of Proſperity ſhineth, and the Showers of Adverſity fall on both promiſcuouſly. If there be any difference for the better, it is commonly on the worſer ſide, *Pſal.* 73. 3. to the 8. *verſ.* But there when the laſt Trump ſhall ſound, the living be changed, the dead raiſed, and all ſhall appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, when the Saints ſhall be called, honoured, acquitted, and rewarded; when the Sinner ſhall be arraigned, accuſed, condemned, and executed, when the Judge ſhall ſay to the Saints on his right

right hand, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World:* And to the Sinners on his left hand, *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Then men will ſee and ſay, *Verily there is a reward for the Righteous, Surely there is a God that judgeth in the World. Then men ſhall return and diſcern a difference between the Righteous and the Wicked, between him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not.*

In relation to this great and general Judgment, we may conſider:

1. The Efficient or Judge, *verſ.* 31. *The Son of man ſhall come in his glory, with all his holy Angels, and ſhall ſit on the Throne of his Glory.* He that was judged by man, ſhall be Judge of men.

2. The Subject or Perſons to be judged, all the World; *verſ.* 32. *And before him ſhall be gathered all Nations.* The Congregation of the whole World together ſhall follow upon the ſound of the Trumpet. *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt Trumpet, (for the Trumpet ſhall ſound) the dead* (indefi-

nitely) *shall be raised*, 1 Cor. 15. 52. Some understand the sound of the Trumpet Metaphorically, for the Virtue and Power of Christ, whereby he shall cite and cause all the World to appear before him. Others take it literally and properly, as God appeared on Mount *Sinai*, when he gave the Law with the long and loud sound of a Trumpet, *Exod.* 19. 19. So he will appear at the great Day with the sound of a Trump, when he comes to reckon with men for the breach of the Law, *Matth.* 24. 31. *And he shall send his Angels with a great sound of a Trumpet.* The *Jews* gathered their solemn Assemblies together with the sound of a Trumpet.

And God will gather the greatest assembly of men that ever was with the sound of a Trumpet. *Adam* shall then see all his Children to the hundredth, and thousandth, and hundred thousand Generation.

3. The Form or Proceeding at that day, from *vers.* 32. to the end.

4. The Event or Execution of the Sentence, *vers.* 1. *And these shall go into everlasting punishment*, (as *Hamans* face was

was covered when the Sentence was given, and presently led forth to Execution) *and the Righteous into life eternal.*

About the Form or Process of this Day, wherein the Text lieth, these four particulars are observable:

1. The separation of Persons.
2. The setting them in their places.
3. The manifestation of persons and things.
4. The pronunciation of the Sentence.

1. The separation of Persons. Now the Tares and Wheat grow together, but then they shall be parted asunder, *vers.* 32. *And before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepheard separateth his sheep from the goats.* Here they mingle together in the same House and Family, and Society, but there the Devils Herd of Goats shall be by themselves, and Christs Flock by themselves. The Wicked shall be gathered together, and he shall bind them in bundles, *Matth.* 13. 41. and the Godly gathered together.

The Sinner ſhall have his deſire, not to be troubled with Admonitions or Singularity of the Preciſe; and the Saint ſhall have his Prayer, not to be vexed with the filthy Converſation of the Prophane, *Pſal.* 26. 4, 5, 6, 7. *I have not ſate with vain perſons, neither will I go in with Diſſemblers: I have hated the Congregation of evil doers, and will not ſit with the Wicked*, &c.

2. The ſetting them in their places. Now the vileſt men are exalted, and the moſt virtuous debaſed, but then it ſhall be otherwiſe. *And then he ſhall ſet the Sheep on his right hand, and the Goats on his left*, verſ. 33. Here the Godly are ſet in low places on foot-ſtools, the Wicked in high places, on Thrones: But there the Godly ſhall be honoured, and the Wicked diſgraced. The right hand is a place of the greateſt honour. To ſit at a Kings right hand, is the higheſt Seat next him. To ſit on King *Solomon*'s right hand, was the honour he gave his Mother, 1 *King.* 2. 19. To ſit at the right hand of God, is peculiar to Chriſt, whom he hath honoured and exalted above Principalities and Powers. *To which*

which of the Angels ſaid he at any time, ſit thou on my right hand, Epheſ. 20. 21. *Heb.* 1. 13. And to ſit on the right hand of Chriſt will be the honour of his Spouſe, his Queen. At thy right hand was the Queen in Gold of *Ophir*, *Pſal.* 45. 9. They who are now placed at the left hand of earthly Princes, will then be placed at the right hand of the King of Kings, of the bleſſed and glorious Potentate; and they who are now placed at Kings right hands, will be placed at Chriſts left hand.

3. The manifeſtation of Perſons and things:

1. Of Perſons.

1. Of Men. All men ſhall then be pellucid and tranſparent as Chriſtal. *We muſt all appear*, τὸν γὰρ πάντας ἡμᾶς φανερωθῆναι δεῖ, 2 Cor. 5. 10. *For we muſt all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt*, φανερωθῆναι. The word ſignifieth a clear and a permanent manifeſtation. Such a clear manifeſtation of men, that every one may ſee into them, what they are, and what they have been; and ſuch a permanent manifeſtation as will laſt for ever, according to the Greek *Scholiaſt*, on

1 *Tim.* 3. 18. Good men ſhall then be manifeſted, their Principles, their Practices, their Deſigns and Purpoſes, and their uprightneſs in all to their glory and praiſe. They who are now accuſed of Hypocriſie, and Obſtinacy, and Pride, and Peeviſhneſs; becauſe they could not ſwim with the ſtream, nor run with others to the ſame exceſs of riot, will then be manifeſted to be men of Integrity and Humility, and to have declined the prophane courſes of others, not out of fooliſh preciſeneſs, or needleſs ſcrupuloſity, or humourſomeneſs, but out of Conſcience to the Commands of God. Their Faith, and Love, and Sincerity, will be found to their praiſe, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jeſus; *When Chriſt who is our Life ſhall appear, then ſhall ye appear with him in Glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 7. They who are now deſpiſed, and reproached, and trampled on as the dirt and dung, and filth of the Earth, will then be manifeſted to be Gods Jewels, Chriſts Glory, and the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt. *When Chriſt who is our Life ſhall appear, we ſhall appear with him in Glory*, Col. 3. 4. Then there

there will be a *manifeſtation of the Sons of God*, Rom. 8. 19.

Bad men will then be manifeſted to be the Servants of Unrighteouſneſs, the Children of the Devil, the Slaves and Vaſſals of Corruption, and notwithſtanding all their glorious Profeſſion, and ſpecious Pretences, to have been but as a painted Sepulchre, gaudy without, and rottenneſs within; or as a curious Chimney-piece, without white and ſhining, but within full of ſoot and blackneſs: *He will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and make manifeſt the thoughts of the heart.*

2. Of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. We read of the appearing of Chriſt at that day, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. *Col.* 3. 4. He was vail'd, and hid, and obſcured, when on Earth, but then he ſhall be reveal'd and diſcover'd to the whole World. *When the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven*, 2 Theſſ. 1. 7. And it will be a glorious Revelation. *Looking for the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, Tit. 2. 13.

In this World he appeared as the Son of man, as one born of a Woman, and in

in the form of a Servant; but then he ſhall appear as the Son of God, as the only begotten of the Father, and as the Head of Principalities and Powers, and as the Heir of all things, *Matth.* 16. 27. *For the Son of Man ſhall come in the Glory of his Father, with his Angels: and then he ſhall reward every man according to his works. He ſhall come in the Glory of his Father*; i. e. in that Glory and Honour which is proper and peculiar to the Divine Nature.

At his firſt appearing a weak mortal man was his Harbinger, to prepare his way before him; But at his ſecond appearing, a mighty immortal Arch-Angel ſhall be his fore-runner, and go before him. *For the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend with a ſhout, with the voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God*, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 16. At his firſt appearing he was accompanied with a few poor mean Fiſhermen, but at his ſecond appearing he ſhall be attended *with his mighty Angels*, 2 Theſſ. 1. 7. *With all his holy Angels*, Matth. 6. 27. With the thouſand thouſand that are before him, and the ten thouſand times ten thouſand that miniſter to him. At

Mat. 3. 3, 4.

At his first appearing he came as a Servant to minister unto others, and to be abased; *He came riding upon an Asse, Matth.* 20. 5. & 28. But at his second appearing he shall come in the Clouds of Heaven as his Chariot, *Matth.* 26.61. *To be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe.* And then he shall appear as a Lord; some think it's therefore called *the Lords-day*, 2 Pet. 3. 10.

At his first appearing he appeared wholly as a Saviour and Redeemer. When he appeared to the World, the *Philanthropy*, or kindness of God to man appeared, *Titus* 3.4. *And the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation appeared, Titus* 2.11. But then he shall appear as a Judge, full of Fire, and Fury, and Wrath against his Enemies. The Kings, and Captains, and Nobles will call to the Rocks to fall on them, and to the Mountains to cover them from the wrath of the Lamb, when that great day of his Wrath is come, *Rev.* 6. 16, 17.

At first he appeared as a Sinner; *In the likeness of sinful flesh*, Rom. 8.3. *He was numbred among the Transgressors:*

The

The Lord laid on him the inquity of us all, Isa. 53. 12. He was called *a Samaritan, and one that had a Devil*, Joh. 10. *A Wine-bibber, and a Glutton, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners*, Joh. 8. 48. Matth. 11. 19. A Traytour against *Cæsar*, *Joh.* 19. 12. One guilty of Blasphemy against God, *Matth.* 26. 65. A Conjurer, and one in Compact and Covenant with the Devil, *Matth.* 12. 24. But his second appearing will be without any such likeness of sinful Flesh, or imputation of sin by God, or reputation of a Sinner among men. *But unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto Salvation*, Heb. 9. ult.

2. There will be at that day a manifestation of things. The Books that are now sealed up, will then be opened, *Rev.* 20. 12.

The Book of the Divine Decrees will then be unclasped, and the Names written in the Lambs Book of Life will then be visible and legible to all. *And I saw the dead small and great stand before God, and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life*, Rev. 20. 12. All the Divine Providences

dences in time will be manifeſt, then will the Divine Purpoſe from eternity, as now the Divine Purpoſe is manifeſt by the Divine Providence.

The Book of Divine Providences will then be opened, and all the rare curious Contrivances thereof unfolded; the agreement of Providence with the Promiſes (as well as with the eternal Purpoſe) will then be apparent. The Hiſtory of the whole World will then be read by the Saints in one entire Volume. Now we ſee a little of Gods Wiſdom, and Power, and Faithfulneſs in one Providence, and a little in another, and a little in a third; yea, we are ſo blind, and Providences often ſo dark, that through our ignorance and unbelief, God loſeth much of the Glory due to him for them, and we much of the comfort we might receive by them; but then we ſhall with ſtrengthened and enlarged Underſtandings diſcern the whole Series, Method, and Contexture of Divine Providences together, and how by a powerful, wiſe, gracious Government, all things conſpired, and combin'd, and wrought together for our everlaſting good, *Rom.* 8. 28.

28. It's one thing to ſee a rich piece of Arras, with a curious ſtory wrought in it, by parcels and pieces, and another thing to ſee it all together, hung up, and to be ſeen all at once with one view.

The Book of Conſcience will then be opened. Though now wicked men blot and blur this Book by their wilful Preſumptuous ſins, that they cannot read it; though they darken their Eyes, and ſtiffen their Wills, and harden their Hearts, and will not read it, yet then they ſhall have the Book of Conſcience repreſenting to them in large, though black, yea bloody Characters, all their atheiſtical Impieties, Enormities, Drunkenneſs, Revellings, Debaucheries, Hypocriſies, Blaſphemies, and they ſhall be forced to read them with ſorrow and terror, whether they will or no.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The diviſion and brief Explication of

4. THe Pronunciation of the Sentence, *verſ.* 41, 42, 43, &c.

In which we may take notice:

1. Of the Perſons ſentenced; theſe are deſcribed:

1. By their ſtation, on the left hand; *Then ſhall he ſay to them on the left hand.*

2. By their condition, curſed ones, *Depart ye curſed.*

2. Of their puniſhment. In which there is:

1. Pain of loſs, *Depart from me.*

2. Pain of ſenſe, which puniſhment is aggravated.

1. By its extremity, Fire. This is amplified:

1. By their Companions in thoſe flames, *The Devil and his Angels.*

2. By the Divine Ordination of it for them, *Prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

2. By

2. By its eternity, *Everlasting Fire.*

3. Of the reason of this punishment; *For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink,* vers. 42, 43.

I shall begin with the Sentence, wherein every word speaks Woe and Wrath, Fire and Fury, Death and Damnation; and every syllable speaks the deepest Sorrow and dreadfulest Sufferings. It is like *Ezekiel's* Roll, *written within and without; and within is written Lamentation, Weeping and Woe*, Ezek. 2. 10. The Lord Chief Justice of the World, the Judge of the Quick and Dead is now in all his Robes and Royalty, with millions of glorious Attendants, in the Glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels, set on the Bench. The poor Prisoner, whose trembling Soul is newly reunited to the loathsome Carkasse of his Body, is drag'd to the Bar, awaiting and expecting some doleful doom. He is lately come from Hell, to give an account of his Life on Earth, and to receive his Sentence; and loath he is to go back to that place of torments, as knowing that the pain of his Body will be

be a new and grievous addition to his misery, when that ſhall burn in flames as his Soul doth already in fury. Therefore he pleads,

Priſoner. Lord let me ſtay here (though poor wretch he hath his Hell about him in his accuſing, affrighting Conſcience) rather than go to that Dungeon of darkneſs. A ſight of thy beautiful Face may poſſibly abate my Sorrows, and thy Preſence may mittigate my Sufferings.

Judge. No, ſaith Chriſt, here is no abiding for thee, be gone hence. Thou mayſt remember when my Preſence was thy Torment, when thou didſt bid me depart from thee, chooſing my room before my company. Now my abſence ſhall be thy Terror, I like thee not ſo well to have thee nigh me. *Depart*, I ſay, *from me.*

Priſoner. Lord, if I muſt undergo ſo dreadful a doom, as to depart from thee, the Father of Lights, and Fountain of Life, yet bleſs me before I go; One good wiſh of thy Heart, one good word of thy Mouth will make me bleſſed where ever I go. Thoſe

whom thou bleſſeſt, are bleſſed indeed; *Bleſs me, even me, O my Father:* At this parting grant me thy bleſſing.

Judge. Sinner, be gone, and my curſe go along with thee. Thou haſt many a time deſpiſed my Bleſſing when it hath been offer'd to thee, though I was made a Curſe to purchaſe it for thee; therefore, I ſay, depart from me, and the Curſe of an angry Lord, and of a righteous Law accompany thee for ever. *Depart*, I ſay, *thou curſed.*

Priſoner. Lord, if I muſt go, and thy Curſe with me, ſend me to ſome good place, where I may find ſomewhat to refreſh me under thy loſs and curſe. It's miſery enough to loſe thy preſence, Good Lord, command me to ſome good place.

Judge. No, Sinner, be gone with my Curſe to that place which will torture and rack thee with extremity and univerſality of pains. The time hath been that thou haſt wallowed in ſenſual Pleaſures, now thou muſt fry in intollerable flames. *Depart thou curſed into fire.*

Priſoner.

Priſoner. Ah Lord, if I muſt go with thy Curſe, and to ſo woful a place as fire, I beſeech thee, let me not ſtay there long. Alas, who can abide devouring flames one moment? material fires of mans kindling are terrible, but how intollerable are thoſe flames which thy breath, like a ſtream of brimſtone, hath kindled? I beſeech thee, if I muſt go to it, let me paſs ſwiftly through it, and not ſtay in it.

Judge. No, Sinner, depart, and my Curſe with thee, to thoſe extream Torments that admit of no eaſe, and no end, *where the worm never dieth, and the fire never goeth out; to the Lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone for ever. Depart thou curſed into everlaſting fire.*

Priſoner. Lord, this is diſmal and dreadful indeed to go from thee, who art all good, and to go to fire which hath in it extremity of all evil, and to loſe thee, and fry in flames for ever, ever, ever; yet, Lord, if it is thy Will it ſhould be ſo, hear me yet in one deſire, let me have ſuch ſociety as may mitigate, at leaſt ſuch as may not aggravate my miſery.

Judge. No, Sinner, thy Company must be such for ever as thou didst choose in thy life time. He who was thy Tempter, shall be thy Tormentor. And they who led thee captive at their will, shall be bound with thee in Chains of everlasting darkness, and faggotted up with thee together for unquenchable fire. Such fiery Serpents, gnawing Worms, stinging Adders, poisonous Toads, roaring and devouring Lions, hideous Monsters, frightful Fiends must be thy eternal Companions. *Depart from me thou cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

I shall now speak particularly to the punishment of these wicked ones, and explain the words as I come to speak to them.

Πορευθητε απ' εμου, Est Metaphora qua vita humana cursus per iter sive profectionem describitur.

I begin with the beginning of Christ's Sentence, *viz.* The pain of loss, which shall be the punishment of the damned; *Depart from me.* The word *depart* is a metaphor which describes the course of humane loss by a Journey, *Luk.* 1. 6. 2 *Pet.* 2. 10. And also their progress to death,

death, *Luk.* 13. The eternal death of the damned will conſiſt partly, if not principally in their departure from the Lord of Life.

But it may be Objected, Who can depart from him who is every where? *Chriſt is God*, Joh. 1. 1. 1 Joh. 5. 20. And God is Omnipreſent; *Whither ſhall I fly from thy preſence?* Pſal. 139. 7. Therefore we muſt know there is a three-fold preſence of God or Chriſt:

1. There is the eſſential preſence of God, as he is infinite in his Being, included in no place, and excluded out of none, ſo none can depart from him, *Pſal.* 139. 6. *to* 10. *Jer.* 23. 24. *Amos* 9. 2, 3.

2. There is the favourable preſence of God, as he is the Fountain of Life and Love, and the Father of Mercy, and kindneſs, and all good. The former is the preſence of his Being, this of his Bounty. This is as the preſence of the Sun by his heat chearing, and by his light delighting the Creature. His preſence in this ſenſe is the ſubſtance of his Promiſes; *Fear not, I will be with thee, Iſa.* 43. 2, 3, 5. *Jer.* 1. 8. *Jer.* 15. 20.

Luk. 1. 28. *Act.* 18. 10. His presence in this sense is the Redeemers purchase; *He suffered, the Just for the Unjust, to bring us to God*, 1 Pet. 3. 18. Thence the Name of the Redeemer is *Immanuel*, *God with us*, Matth. 1. 23. Against his departure in this sense, *Jer.* 14. 8. is the Churches earnest Prayer, *Leave us not.* And the fear of it doth so affect *Moses*, that he is ready to throw up all, *Exod.* 33. 15. *If thy presence go not with us, carry us not hence.*

His presence in this sense is Heaven it self, *Psal.* 16. *ult. In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore*, *Luk.* 22. 1 *Thess.* 4. 17. *Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.* This is that presence of Christ which the wicked shall want for ever; This is included in, *Depart from me.*

3. There is the afflicting punishing presence of God. There is the presence of his Fury, as well as of his Favour. In this sense *Job* prayeth for God's absence; *How long wilt thou not depart from*

from me? Job 7. 19. Which *Junius* gloſſeth, *Turn thine anger away from me.* In this ſenſe God tells men, *That he will viſit them*, i. e. *with Judgments.* As a Father beholding his Child about ſome naughty Action, tells him, *I'le be with you preſently*, meaning to correct him: *Iſa.* 23. 17. *Jer.* 6. 15. *At the time that I viſit them, they ſhall be caſt down, ſaith the Lord.* In this ſenſe wicked men ſhall have the preſence of God for ever. His tormenting preſence, as well as the abſence of his Grace and Favour, will be their eternal portion. And certainly if his afflicting preſence in this World, which hath love for its Original, and their good for its end, be ſo grievous to his own people, that they cry out, *Let him turn from me, Job* 14. 6. Let him depart away; what will his tormenting preſence be to the wicked in the other World, of which wrath, pure wrath is the Original, and ſatisfaction to juſtice his end.

CHAP. III.

Concerning the privative part of the Sinners Punishment.

THis part of the Verse will afford this Doctrine.

Doct. That a great part of wicked mens punishment in the other World, will consist in their departure from the presence of Christ; *Then shall he say to them on his left hand, Depart from me.* They now bid God depart from them, *They say unto God, Depart from us*, Job 21. 14. But that which is their wish here, shall be their woe for ever. *And he shall say unto them, depart from me ye workers of Inquity, I know you not*, Matth. 7. 23. The presence of Christ is now their Trouble, but his absence will then be their Torment. Hence the state of the wicked in the other World is called *utter-darkness*, Matth. 8. 12. *And blackness of darkness for ever*, Jude, vers. 13. Because of its separation from Christ, who is the *Light of the World*, and the *Sun of Righteousness*, Joh. 1. 9. Mal.

Calvin in Matth. 8. 12.

Mal. 4. 2. It seems an allusion to them that are fetter'd in dark doleful dungeons, or to those that in the night-time stand without in the dark, being excluded such Rooms as are full of Lights, wherein are rare and costly Feasts.

In the explication of this Doctrine, I shall describe the punishment of the wicked: 1. In the perfection of the Object, from which they must depart. 2. In the properties of their departure, and then give the Reasons of the Doctrine.

First, As for the Object of their loss.

1. They lose *the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Life, the Lord of Glory, the fairest of ten thousand, the only begotten of the Father, and the Heir of all things.* The better the Object is, the greater their loss who are deprived of it. The more excellent the Person of Christ is, the more exquisite their punishment will be who must depart from him. Christ is the highest, the greatest, the chiefest good. In losing him,

1. They depart from an universal good, one that is Bread, Water, Light, Life, Rest, Health, Ease, Wine, Marrow, a Feast,

a Feast, a Friend, a Father, Pardon, Peace, Love, Grace, Glory, any thing, every thing, all things that the Soul wanteth, and requireth to its perfect Felicity.

2. They depart from a suitable good, that very savoury meat which the Soul loveth and needeth. They lose that good which the Soul should have, and would have, and must have, if ever it be happy. The Soul is guilty, and Christ is pardon, pardon is suitable to a guilty Soul, 1 *Joh.*1.7. *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* The Soul is poor, and Christ is riches; Riches are suitable to a poor Creature, *Eph.*3.8. *The unsearchable Riches of Christ*: Prov. 8.18. *Riches and Honour are with me, yea durable Riches and Righteousness.* The Soul is miserable, naked, filthy, obnoxious to Death and Wrath, but Christ is Mercy, Raiment, cleansing, freedom from Hell, and the Heaven of Heaven, *Rev.* 3.17, 18. 1 *Thess.* 1. *ult.* *Rom.* 8.1. He is a good that doth exactly, directly suit the condition of the Soul, the miseries of the Soul, and the necessities of the Soul. He is the Plaister that fits the Sores,

Sores, and the Balm that hits the wounds of the Soul; when Creatures are Physicians and Physick of no value.

3. They depart from an eternal Good, they lose that Good which doth not only suit the Souls disposition, but also its duration, that will last and abide, and continue for ever. *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*, Heb. 13. 8. *He is everlasting Righteousness*, Dan. 9. 24. *Everlasting meat*, Joh. 6. 27. *Eternal life*, 1 Joh. 5. ult.

2. They depart from, with Christ, the Society of all Christians: When they depart from the Head, they depart from the Members. When they depart from the Root, they depart from the Branches. For Head and Members, Root and Branches, must be together for ever, *Joh.* 14. 2, 3. *Where I am, there ye may be also.* Now the Sheep and Goats flock together, but then they shall be parted asunder, *Matth.* 8. 11, 12. *And I say unto you, that many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall set down with* Abraham, Isaac, *and* Jacob, *in the Kingdom of Heaven: But the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast out*

out into utter darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. They who are now the Objects of their Contempt, will then be the Objects of their envy. When once they lose the sight, they shall lose the sight of those glorious Stars for ever. Every Saint may then say to the Sinner (who now frets and fumes at the Saints presence, because of his preciseness) as *Moses* to *Pharoah, I will see thy face no more*, Matth. 25. ult.

3. They shall depart, when from Christ, from all the means of Grace, or Communion with God. They shall hear no more Sermons, and joyn in no more Prayers, and receive no more tenders of Grace, or intreaties of the Gospel, *Isa.* 38. 11. *I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the Land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the Inhabitants of the world.* Where the King is, there he hath his Secretaries, and Seals, and Ministers of State; and they who are banished the Court, are banished from these.

4. They shall depart from all the good things of this Life. Each Country hath its proper peculiar Commodities, and so

so hath each World. This World hath its peculiar good things, such as are proper to this, and not to be found in the other World; therefore the Apostle calls them *this worlds goods*: *He that hath this worlds goods*, 1 Joh. 3. 17. So the other World hath its proper peculiar Commodities, such as are to be found no where else. The blessings of this are not to be look'd for in the other Life, *There is neither marrying, nor giving in marriage, but all are as Angels.* Good men, as good Angels, above all bodily and temporal Blessings; and evil Men, as evil Angels, without them, and fixed in a state of endless misery. The wicked man possibly was honourable, but his glory doth not follow after him, *Psal.* 49. 17. He was rich, but that was only in this world, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. He was one that abounded in Pleasures, but now they are gone and exchanged for pains, *James* 5. 5. *Luk.* 16. 25. *But* Abraham *said, Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise* Lazarus *evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* The Sinner shall bid adieu to Temporal good, Spiritual good, Eternal

Eternal good, all good, that he may ſpeak indefinitely, what *Job* ſuppoſing himſelf dying, ſpake reſtrictively, *Mine eye ſhall no more ſee good*, Job 7. 7.

CHAP. IV.

The Properties of the Sinners loſs.

Secondly, I Shall ſpeak to the Properties of this departure from Chriſt, or loſs therein.

1. It is ſpiritual. It is a loſs peculiar to the Soul or Spirit of Man, and a loſs of that good that is moſt ſuitable to the Soul or Spirit of Man. No mercies are like Soul-mercies, *Epheſ.* 1. 3. and *Job* 6. 4. No miſeries are like Soul-miſeries. For the nobler any Being is, the better that is which advantageth it, and the worſe that is that injureth it. It's one thing to relieve or abuſe a diſtreſſed Prince, and another thing to relieve or abuſe a diſtreſſed Subject. The Soul of man is the Prince, the chief and nobleſt part of man, and it is principally the ſubject (as chiefly ſenſible) of this departure.

parture. It's true, the Soul cannot depart from God locally, but it can and doth morally here, in its affections and converſation; But that which is now its practice and pleaſure, will then be their torment and puniſhment. Other loſſes pinch the Fleſh, but this pierceth the Spirit. Other loſſes are caſtigatory, and the portion of Children; but this is damnatory, and the portion of Devils. Ah how will the Soul pine and wither away, when it ſhall take its farewel of that Sun, who alone could revive and refreſh it? What a diſmal, doleful death muſt it undergo, when it ſhall depart from him, who is its only Life? *Such a wounded Spirit who can bear?* The Soul hath more exquiſite ſenſe, and more curious feeling than the Body; therefore its loſs of its own peculiar ſuitable ſatisfying good will cut deep, and fill it with bitter horrour.

2. It will be a total departure. Here they depart in part from God, but then totally. Here *Cain* complains, if not allowed God's preſence in Ordinances, though he had his preſence in many ways of ordinary Favour; *Behold, thou haſt*

haſt driven me this day from the face of the Earth, and from thy face ſhall I be hid, Gen. 4. 14. But alas how doth he complain there? where he is wholly deprived of the Divine preſence in any way of Favour; where he hath not the leaſt glimpſe of the light of his Countenance. The partial departures of God have forced ſad Complaints from them that are godly, *Job* 13. 24. *Why hideſt thou thy face, and holdeſt me for thine enemy?* ſaith *Job*. I can bear the with-drawings of men, and their abſence: I can bear the ſtrangeneſs of my Friends, and the unkindneſs of Relations, but I cannot bear thy ſtrangeneſs to me, thy with-drawings from me? *Why hideſt thou thy face? Job* though a ſtrong ſtout man, able to overcome the ſtrong One, the Devil; yet was ready to faint away and die at this. *David* crieth out mournfully at it, *Pſal.* 10. 1. *Why ſtandeſt thou afar off, O Lord? why hideſt thou thy ſelf in time of trouble.* Poor *Heman* is diſtracted, and almoſt dead with it, *Pſal.* 88. 14, 15. *Lord, why hideſt thou thy face? I am afflicted and ready to die; while I ſuffer thy terrors, I am diſtracted.*

If

If these partial departures, which had much love in them, and with them, cast down the Friends of God so heavily, O what will his total departures out of pure Wrath cause to his Enemies. That world must needs be doleſome and darkſome indeed, to whom this Sun is wholly set, and totally eclipſed.

2. It will be an eternal departure. They must leave God for ever; though it had been ſpiritual and total, yet if but temporal, there had been ſomewhat to have allay'd their Sorrows; but to ſuffer ſo great a loſs, and that wholly, and for ever too, muſt needs pierce to the quick. The Sinner ſhall ſee the bleſſed Jeſus no more for ever. He muſt depart from the tendereſt Father, lovingeſt Friend, richeſt Treaſure, choiceſt Good, greateſt Glory, ſweeteſt Pleaſure, and that for ever, *Jude, verſ.* 13. *To whom is reſerved blackneſs of darkneſs for ever.* The Sentence one denounced, *Depart from me*, will be like the Law of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, which cannot be altered: 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 8, 9. *Who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, from the preſence of the Lord.* The Anchor

of Hope will then be broken, the Bridge of Grace will then be drawn, the Gate of Mercy will then be shut, and the Gulph between Christ and the Wicked never to be passed over. They may cry out in truth, what the *Psalmist* in unbelief, *Will the Lord cast off for ever? will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever?* Psal. 77. 7, 8. Alas, they are cast off for ever, he will be favourable to them no more. They may roar out in vain, *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, shall I never me remembred?* Psal. 13. 1.

4. It is an irreparable loss, such a loss as nothing can make up. There are many good things which we may do well without, because the want of them may be supplied by other things. But Christ is the one thing necessary, the one thing excellent; the want of whom no good thing in Heaven or Earth can make up. When the Soul departs from Christ, it departs from all good; because nothing is good without him, and nothing can be had in the room of him. If some kind of Food be wanting, another kind may possibly do as well; so

if

if some sort of Drugs or Herbs for Physick be wanting, there may be others found of the same Virtue and Operation; but if once the Soul be sentenced to depart from Christ, there is nothing to compensate this loss. He is the Saviour, and indeed the only Saviour, *Act.* 4. 12. He is the Mediator between a Righteous God and a guilty Creature, and indeed the only Mediator, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.*

CHAP. V.

The reasons of the Sinners privative Punishment.

Thirdly, I Proceed to the Reasons of this Doctrine, and shall name but two:

1. Wicked men in the other world shall be sentenced to depart from Christ, because of their wickedness or unworthiness of his presence. The Judge himself gives this Reason in the Text, *vers.*

42, 43. *For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat*, &c. Sin is the great Wall of Partition between God and his Creatures: *Evil cannot ſtand in thy ſight, neither canſt thou behold the works of Iniquity*, Pſal. 5. They muſt loſe the light of his Countenance, who never minded the light of his Commandments; the holy Jeſus cannot abide the Company of unholy Creatures. *Shall the Throne of Iniquity have fellowſhip with thee?* No, it may not, it cannot, *Pſal.* 94. 20. It's contrary to his Honour, who hath threatned their baniſhment from him; and it's contrary to his Nature, who hates their Company.

If God depart from his own people in this world in part, and for a time, it is for their ſins. Your Iniquities ſeparate between me and your Souls, *Iſa.* 59. 2. Thus they are the Cloud that interpoſe between the Soul and the Sun of Righteouſneſs, and hinder the light of his Favour from ſhining on us. *Job* knew and acknowledged this, in *Job* 13. 24, 25, 26. *Why hideſt thou thy Face? Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, and makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth.*

Iſa. 44. 22.

And

And if wicked men depart totally and eternally from God in the other World, it is for their ſins. *Depart from me ye Workers of Iniquity, I know you not,* Matth. 7. 23. Luke 13. 27. Departure from Chriſt is the Wages which the Workers of Iniquity earn. Deeds of darkneſs merit utter darkneſs.

Wicked men now deſire Chriſt to depart from them. *They beſought him to depart out of their Coaſts,* Matth. 8. ult. But what is now their Pleaſure, ſhall then be their Puniſhment. He will go from them, who bid him be gone; and hide his Face for ever from thoſe who turn their backs upon him in time. He that prepares for Sinners the Torments of Hell, will not beſtow on them the Joys of Heaven.

2. Becauſe of their unfitneſs for the preſence of Chriſt. A carnal heart cannot ſavour a ſpiritual Heaven. The vitiated nature of man cares not for the pleaſures joyn'd with the holineſs of the Cœleſtial Paradiſe. *When Angels kept not their firſt Eſtate, they left their own Habitation,* Jude, verſ. 6. As ſoon as they loſt their primitive Purity, they

loſt the place of their Glory and Felicity. When once they turn'd haters of God and Holineſs, of their own accord they forſook Heaven. Diſtemper'd Palats cannot relliſh the choiceſt Dainties. How can the wicked delight in God (which is the Heaven of Heaven) who have in them a predominant enmity againſt him, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Follow after holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* It's holineſs that makes the Soul fit and meet for Heaven, *Col.* 1.12. *Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* The Blind are as capable of ſeeing, and the Deaf of hearing, and the Dead of eating and drinking, as wicked men are of ſeeing God as he is, and hearing the melodious Songs of Saints and Angels, and of feeding of the Tree of Life that groweth in the midſt of Paradiſe, and of drinking of the pure Water that floweth from the Throne of God and the Lamb. If the Tabernacle on Earth, wherein are the Saints of God, and holy Inſtitutions of Chriſt, and the Divine Worſhip, for four or five hours in a week, be a Priſon

to

to earthly carnal men, surely the Temple in Heaven, wherein is the holy One of *Israel* in the greatest manifestion of his holiness, holy Angels, perfect Spirits, pure Service of the blessed God, without interruption or cessation, would be a Purgatory, yea an Hell to them. Communion with God is impossible (*in natura rei*) without conformity to him, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14. They tell a broad lye, who say, *They have fellowship with God here, and walk after their own lusts*, 1 Joh. 1. 6. *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk even as he walked.* Our delight in God is ever proportionable to our desires of him. Now wicked men desiring above all things the absence, yea the dethroning of God; can never take any delight in his presence, though they should be admitted thereunto.

If suitableness be wanting, that which is never so excellent is no way joyous or pleasant to us. All Creatures delight only in what is suitable to their natures. *Barzillai* refused the pleasures of *Davids* Court, because they were so unsuitable to an old man, that they would be no

pleaſures to him; he could not taſt their Meat, nor hear their Muſick. So all the delights of the Cœleſtial Court would be no delights (becauſe of their unſuitableneſs) to ſinful ſenſual natures. Ungodly men could not relliſh the ſpiritual Dainties at the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb, nor hear with pleaſure the heavenly Quire ſinging the Song of *Moſes* and the Lamb. I grant that wicked men are naturally capable of Heaven, as they are rational Creatures; but they are morally uncapable, as they are predominantly carnal and ſinful; ſo they want that holineſs which ſhould prepare, and diſpoſe, and fit them for Heaven.

CHAP. VI.

Uſes concerning the hainous nature of Sin, and grievous miſery of Sinners.

Uſe. I Shall now apply this Doctrine. It may be uſeful by way of Information, and by way of Exhortation: 1. By way of Information.

1. It

1. It may inform us. If the Wicked in the other World ſhall be baniſhed the preſence of Chriſt, then how hainous is the nature of Sin, and how odious to God? God is love it ſelf, and delights in Mercy; yea, takes pleaſure in the Proſperity of men; *Joh.* 1. 4. *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.* Micah 7. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth Iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the Remnant of his Heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in mercy.* Therefore it muſt be ſome grievous Crime, and ſomewhat which is very offenſive to him, that provokes him to ſentence them to an eternal baniſhment from him. O how horrid a thing is Sin? It brings all evil, *Rom.* 2. 7, 8. And deprives of all good, *Iſa.* 59. 2. Its formal nature is a voluntary departure from Gods Precepts, *Heb.* 3. 12. *Jer.* 2. 5. And its woful Effect is an eternal total departure from his gracious preſence. His partial temporary departure from his own people, (who are the Objects of his eternal Choice, and infinite Love) *which makes them go mourning all the day, and lie roaring*

roaring all the night, because of their sins, speaks much of the evil of sin, but his full everlasting departure from others, which leaves them naked and stript of all Comfort, and exposed to all Misery and Mischief, doth more abundantly proclaim its filthiness and loathsomeness. It can be no ordinary Cloud or Vapour that can obscure the Sun at noon-day, in all his beauty and brightness, and turn the clear day into a black night. And it can be no little or small thing which provokes *the Father of Mercy, and God of all Grace* to deal so severely with the works of his own hands.

2. It informs us of the unconceivable misery of Sinners; They must depart from Christ for ever. To depart for ever from loving and lovely Relations, is no mean misery to them who have no other Kindred than those on Earth. It was no small trial of *Abraham* to leave his Kindred and Fathers house, *Gen.* 12. 1. To depart for ever from dear and intimate Friends, is a sore trouble to him whose heart is knit to them. The failure and distance of Friends was grievous to *Job*, *Job* 19. 13, 14. And *David*, *Psal.* 38. 11.

To

To depart for ever from all the Saints, the Children of the most high, the excellent of the Earth, from the Members of Christ, of whom the World is not worthy, will cut deep in them who have any eyes to see the amiableness of their Persons, and any hearts to understand the benefit of their Prayers and Patterns: But to depart for ever from Christ, the Prince of Life, the Lord of Glory, the Heir of all things; the richest Treasure, and highest Honour, and sweetest Pleasure, is doleful and dreadful indeed. How may the damned cry out, Ah whither do we go now we are going from thee, *thou hast the words of eternal life.*

The presence of Christ is the happiness of the Soul on Earth, *Deut.* 4. 7. *I will see you, and your hearts shall rejoyce.* Joh. 16. 22. *And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoyce, and your joy no man taketh from you.* No such hearty comfort, as in the gracious presence of Christ. And the presence of Christ, is the happiness of the Soul in Heaven. *I desire to be dissolved* (though death simply consider'd

ſider'd be not deſirable) *and to be with Chriſt. Finis conciliat mediis amorem,* His preſence is the Heaven of Heavens. It's the excellency of the new *Jeruſalem,* that *there the Tabernacle of God is with men,* and God himſelf ſhall be with them, *Rev.*21.3. And the felicity of the Citizens there. They ſhall ſee his Face, *Rev.*22.4. In the preſence of Chriſt is all good, and in the abſence of Chriſt is all evil. If it were death to *Abſolom* not to ſee the Kings face, what death will it be to the damned, to be denied for ever the bliſsful ſight of the face of Chriſt.

If God depart from his people in ſome degrees, (for he is their God ſtill, *Pſal.* 22. 1. *Pſal.* 88. 1.) and but for a time; as a loving Father, to make his Children more ſenſible of their folly, and of the worth of his Favour; How ſadly have they cried out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* How horribly will they ſcreech and roar, from whom he departs wholly and eternally, as a ſupream and righteous Judge.

It will greatly aggravate their miſery, to conſider theſe particulars:

1. The

1. The greatneſs of their loſs. It's not the loſs of an Houſe, or Eſtate, or bodily good, but the loſs of a Soul, the loſs of a Saviour, the loſs of a God; yea the loſs of all good, and that for ever. It's ſuch a loſs as never had its fellow or equal: It's ſuch a loſs as cannot admit of any addition to it. It's a loſs that never had the like before it, nor ſhall have the like after it. It's an incomparable loſs, that the damned may ſay as he, *Te have taken away my God, and what have I more?*

2. For how ſmall a thing they loſe the bleſſed Jeſus. If they had loſt Chriſt for ſomewhat which might have countervail'd the want of him, or had in any degree equal'd him, it had been the better; but to loſe a God, a Chriſt, a Soul, fulneſs of Joy, for a little aiery Honour, or bruitiſh Pleaſure; this will cut to the heart. O how will it wound the Soul in the other World to think, for how ſmall a toy, for how pitiful a trifle, have I loſt a Crown of Glory, and Rivers of Pleaſures for ever! Ah what a Fool have I been to loſe Subſtance for Shadows, Bread for Husks, a Fountain of

of living Waters for broken Cisterns, their own Mercies for lying Vanities, Christal streams for puddle Water, the choice Dainties of Gods House for the Devils scraps, Heaven for Earth, and all things for nothing! Was any in *Bedlam* ever half so distracted.

3. It will much aggravate their misery to consider, that it was their own voluntary act to lose so much for so little. They shall then think with themselves, that this woful condition in which they are, was their own choice. All the power and policy of Earth and Hell could not force them to destroy themselves. The Cords that bind them were of their own twisting, the Rods that scourge them were gather'd with their own hands. The Web in which they are caught, and kill'd, was spun out of their bowels. God may say to them, as once to *Israel*, *Ye have destroyed your selves*, Hos. 13. Ye are your own Murtherers. I put your Salvation so far into your own hands, that ye could not be damned against your wills. *Your own Iniquities correct you, and ye are holden with cords of your own sins*, Prov. 5. 22.

Jer.

Jer. 4. 18. *Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart.* Jer. 2. 19. *Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy back-slidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God.*

4. It will exceedingly increase their anguish, to know perfectly the greatness of their loss. Here they know not the worth of a Christ; and thence they are little troubled at the want of Christ, but then their eyes shall be opened to see the Beauty, Excellency, and Amiableness of him whom they have lost, and to see the costly Delicacies, choice Dainties, pure and perfect Pleasures which the Godly enjoy in him, and with him; and so by the increase of their knowledge, will be an increase of their sorrow. They shall see *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, in the Kingdom of Heaven, they shall see their Neighbours whom they scorned and mocked, for their purity and preciseness in the presence of Christ, in the Arms and embraces of Christ,

Chriſt, in a ſtate of full Happineſs and perfect Satisfaction, while they themſelves are ſhut out, and denied entrance, *Luk.* 13. 25, 28. The fire of Hell will give them light enough to ſee, as well as heat enough to feel themſelves infinitely miſerable.

5. It will greatly add to their torment and anguiſh to conſider, that they were ſometime near the enjoyment of this bliſsful preſence of Chriſt. Pardon, and Peace, and Love, and Life, and the endleſs fruition of the bleſſed Jeſus were tendered to them, were nigh them, were at the very door of their hearts. They were ſolemnly commanded, lovingly invited, ſeverely threatned, ſweetly allured, and pathetically perſwaded to accept of Chriſt and Grace; yea, and Heaven, and Happineſs, and eternal Life; yea, and their hearts began to relent, and to cloſe with the intreaties of the Goſpel; They were almoſt perſwaded to be Chriſtians indeed. There was but a little, a very little between them and Chriſt. The bargain was driven ſo far, that Chriſt was got into their conſciences, they bore witneſs for him,

him, and warn'd them, if they loved their Lives, their Souls, to accept of him while he would accept of them; yea, Chriſt was got into their Judgments, they gave their Verdict on his ſide, as one infinitely more amiable and elegible than the World or Fleſh; nay, he had poſſibly got into their Affections, they delighted to hear of his great Love to poor Sinners, and of the great things he purchaſed for them with his own blood; and yet though they were ſo near, they came ſhort, and like *Ephraim*, play'd the part of unwiſe Sons, and ſtay'd in the place of the breaking forth of Children.

O how like a Dagger will it pierce the heart of them that live under the Goſpel, and neglect the great Salvation offer'd to them; when they come to be baniſhed the preſence of Chriſt, and to ſee others, who made Religion their buſineſs on Earth, bathing their Souls in Rivers of Pleaſures, drawing water with joy out of the Well of Salvation, eating of the Tree of Life that groweth in the midſt of Paradiſe, and hous'd in the Arms of their deareſt Saviour,

and ſhall reflect and conſider with themſelves, all thoſe Joys and Pleaſures, all thoſe Dainties and Delicacies, all thoſe Robes, and Riches, and Glories, and Felicities, which they enjoy in the preſence of Chriſt, might have been mine; they were freely, and frequently, and affectionately offered to me, I had the refuſal of them; nay, I had a good mind to them, I was not far from the Kingdom of Heaven. There was but a little between me and them, they were at the very door of my heart, and ſtood knocking there for admiſſion, and deſired only hearty acceptance; but like a Fool I dallied with them, and defer'd them, as if hereafter had been time enough, and ſo have loſt them for ever.

6. It will much augment their anguiſh and miſery to conſider, who it is that paſſeth ſo ſevere a doom upon them. This dreadful Sentence is pronounced by Love, and Grace, and Goodneſs it ſelf. He that ſometimes call'd them to him ſo ſweetly, ſo affectionately, now caſts them from him ſo ſharply, ſo furiouſly. He who ſometimes cry'd to

to them, *Come to me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden*; and wept over them, *O that thou hadst known, even thou in this thy day, the things of thy peace.* He that formerly invited, intreated, *besought them to be reconciled*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. and ſhew'd them his heart-blood, the price of their Pardon and Life, and ſtretch'd out his Arms to imbrace their returning Souls, will now in wrath, and rage, and flames, and fury, bid them be gone from him, and his Curſe go along with them. And if Love prove their Enemy, ſurely Wrath will not be their Friend. And if Mercy be thus againſt them, ſurely Juſtice will not be for them. Ah how ſorely will it gall the Sinner to conſider, This dreadful doom is denounced againſt me not by an Enemy, or one that hated me, but by a Friend and Father, by one that loved me, and took my nature on him, and ſuffered therein the Laws Curſe, to render me capable of eſcaping theſe Torments which I now ſuffer, and partaking of thoſe Pleaſures which yonder bleſſed Souls enjoy.

CHAP. VII.

Containing the folly of Sinners, and the vaſt difference between them and the Godly at the Great day.

3. IT informeth us that every wicked man is out of his wits; ſurely the man is mad, who exchangeth his Soul, and Saviour, and God, and all for a little worldly profit, or fleſhly pleaſure; yea, that parts with true and durable Riches, for ſhadowy and fading Treaſure, that loſeth heavenly and eternal Joys, for earthly and tranſitory Pleaſures.

No man can love ſin, but he hates himſelf; nor part with his Duty, but he parts with his Felicity. And ſurely ſuch a man who hates himſelf, and forſakes his Happineſs, is a mad man. Well might the Holy Ghoſt ſpeak the Prodigal out of his wits, when he was out of his way, and wandring from his Father's houſe. How mad was he to forſake Bread for Husks? (all the world is but Huſks, dry, coorſe, empty Fare, to the Dainties

Dainties of the Goſpel.) Bread in a Fathers houſe, for Huſks among Swine; yea, and plenty of Bread, enough and to ſpare, for a few Huſks that could not fill their Bellies.

If one Soul be more worth than a whole World, ſurely one Saviour, one God is more worth than a thouſand Souls, than a million of Worlds. How mad then is he that parts with this Soul, this Saviour, this God, for a little, a very little of this World; yea, for this little of the World for a very little time.

If all the delights of the Fleſh, and all the Pleaſures of Sin, and all the profits of the World, cannot ballance the partial enjoyment of God in his Ordinances for one hour; How unable will they be to compenſate the loſs of full Communion with God for ever? O how infinitely doth Chriſt out-weigh what ever the fleſh or world can offer in exchange for him!

4. It informeth how contrary the portion of the Godly and the Wicked is at the day of Judgment. At this day they fare often alike, they fall under the

ſame favourable and frowning Providences, they have the ſame Comforts, and the ſame Croſſes. If any difference for the better, 'tis uſually on the Sinners ſide. *The vileſt men are exalted, and the proud proſper.* But at that day there will be a difference indeed for the better on the Saints ſide. That day will be terrible to the Wicked, a day of wrath, a day of the perdition of ungodly men, *Rom.* 2. 4. 2 *Pet.* 3. 7. To the Godly a day of Redemption, a time of refreſhing, a day of Light and Gladneſs, and a good day, *Luk.* 21. 28. *Act.* 3. 19. *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out, when the time of refreſhment ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord.*

The difference between the Godly and the Wicked at that day will be vaſt.

1. In regard of their ſtation. *Then ſhall he ſeparate them one from another, as a Shepheard divideth his Sheep from the Goats. And he ſhall ſet the Sheep at his right hand,* (in token of honour and favour) *and the Goats on his left,* (as a ſign of ſhame and contempt) *Matth.* 25. 32.

32,33. Thoſe who are now uppermoſt, will then be undermoſt. The filth of the World will then appear to be God's Jewels; and the darlings of the World will then appear to be the Children of the Devil. *The Righteous ſhall have dominion over them in the morning*, *Pſal.* 49. In the night of this world, the Wicked ſit in high Places, and have dominion over the Godly; but in the morning of the World, the Godly ſhall ſit at the right hand of Chriſt, and have dominion over the Wicked.

2. In regard of the Sentence. And indeed herein is the principal difference. God and the Devil, Light and Darkneſs, Heaven and Hell, are not more contrary than the doom of the Godly and Wicked at the great day.

1. His Voice to the Wicked, is, *Depart from me.* And thoſe words will wound to purpoſe: Ah whither do they go that go from Chriſt. His Voice to the Godly, *Come, Come.* No Honey to the Taſt, no Muſick to the Ears, no Cordial to the Heart, was ever ſo ſweet as this word of Chriſt. His Voice in the Goſpel, when he called out, *Come unto*

me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt, was ſweet and refreſhing to them; but that was but as water to this Wine: Come, O come and welcome into my Arms and embraces. When they who had long'd for his coming, and look'd for his coming, *Titus* 2. 13. and loved dearly his coming, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. and ſigh'd and ſob'd ſo often for his coming. *Why are his Chariots ſo long a coming? why tarry the wheels of his Chariot? Make haſte my Beloved, and be thou like the Hart and Roe upon the Mountain of Spices.* And pray'd ſo earneſtly for his coming. *The Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come*, Rev, 22. 17. *Come Lord Jeſus come quickly*, verſ. 20. For theſe to ſee him coming in the Clouds, with all his train of Angels, and to hear him calling to them, *Come to me*; O who can imagine the joy that will fill their hearts! If when they ſaw him coming with the proſpective of Faith, *they rejoyced with joy unſpeakable*; how will they rejoyce when they ſhall ſee him coming with the eye of ſenſe, and hear him call to them to come to him.

2. His

2. His Voice to the Wicked will be, *Depart from me ye curſed.* Be gone as a curſed Brood, and my curſe ſhall follow you where-ever you go. His Voice to the Godly will be, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father.* O come dear Souls, whom my Father bleſſed in his eternal Choice, to bleſs whom he ſent me into the world, as a token of whoſe bleſſing, he hath provided an everlaſting Inheritance for you. Come ye bleſſed in your Souls, bleſſed in your Bodies, bleſſed in your Names, bleſſed in your Conditions, and thrice bleſſed in your eternal poſſeſſions.

3. His Voice to the Wicked will be, *Depart from me ye curſed, into everlaſting fire.* Be gone from me to extremity of Torments, *Fire*; and eternity of Torments, *Everlaſting fire.* His Voice to the Godly will be, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom.* Ye have been Heirs a long while under Age, and Kings in the lower World in diſguiſe, the time is now come for you to enjoy your Inheritance. O come ye bleſſed Ones, and inherit the Kingdom as Kings thereof. Enjoy your full Glory, 2 *Cor.*7.17.

Per-

Perfect Pleaſure, *Pſal.* 18. *ult.* And vaſt Dominion, 1 *Cor.* 6. 3. And *Rev.* 2. 26, 27. *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the Nations, and he ſhall Rule them with a Rod of Iron, &c.* I, and enjoy this Kingdom for ever; *Inherit the Kingdom:* Inheritances are for ever. *The Lord knoweth the days of the Upright, and their Inheritance ſhall be for ever*, Pſal. 37. 18.

4. His Voice to the Wicked will be, *Depart ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Be gone to that place of Torments, which infinite Wiſdom and Wrath contrived, and infinite Power and Juſtice provideth for the Devil, and his curſed Crew. *Depart from me*, and be their Partners and Companions in Torments for ever. His Voice to the Godly will be, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World.* Come take poſſeſſion of a Crown, to which your Heads were deſtin'd before ye were born. O come and partake of thoſe Pleaſures and Joys, of that Glory and Dignity to which infi-

infinite Love elected you, and which infinite Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, and Grace hath prepared for you.

O how vaſt will the difference be at that day between the Servants of God, and the Servants of Sin, when thoſe ſhall weep, and howl, and wail, and gnaſh their teeth for envy and vexation; and ſhall call to the Rocks to fall upon them, and the Mountains to cover them from the Wrath of the Lamb; the Servants of God ſhall ſing and rejoyce, and lift up their Heads with joy, becauſe the day of their Redemption is come, *Rev.* 6. 16. *Luke* 21. 28. *And when theſe things begin to come to paſs, then look up, and lift up your Heads, for your Redemption draweth nigh.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

An use of Trial, with the marks of those that shall be banished Christs presence.

Secondly, THis Doctrine may be useful by way of Exhortation, and that two ways:

1. To try whether thou, *Reader*, art one of them that art like to be banished the presence of Christ. It's a woful doom, as thou hast heard at large; therefore examine thy self, whether it shall be thy part and portion or no? To help thee herein, that thou mayst not deceive and delude thy own Soul, I shall give thee out of the Word of Truth, the Characters of them, to whom Christ will say, *Depart from me.*

1. The evil Liver and prophane Person shall be banished Christs presence. The black Sinner shall not stand before the white Throne. *Then shall he say unto them, Depart from me ye Workers of Iniquity, I know you not*, Matth. 7. 23, *Luk.* 13. 27. Those who lived in the breach

breach of his Commands, muſt not live in the enjoyment of his company. The Workers of Iniquity muſt aſſociate with the wicked One, not with the holy One. Heaven can by no means admit the unholy; *Into it can in no wiſe enter any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh abomination*, Rev. 21. ult. Scandalous Sinners proclaim to the World, That the Devil, not Chriſt, is their Maſter, and that Hell where the Devil is with his Angels, not Heaven where Chriſt is with his Angels ſhall be their eternal home. They who never liked or loved his preſence on the Earth, but baniſhed him their Hearts and Houſes, muſt think and expect that he will not like or love their preſence, but ſentence them to an everlaſting baniſhment from him.

2. The groſly ignorant Creature ſhall be baniſhed the preſence of Chriſt. He will not know them who do not know him. Wilful Ignorance doth certainly exclude the undefiled Inheritance. A blind eye cannot ſee the bleſſed Jeſus in all his Glory; neither can a dark Heart enjoy the Kingdom of Light.

The

The Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, to render Vengeance on them that know not God, (2 Theſſ. 1. 7, 8.) *Who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord.* The portion of ſuch will be everlaſting deſtruction from his preſence. *They are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge, becauſe they reject knowledge;* Chriſt will reject them, *Hoſ.* 4. 6. They are loſt Souls, whoſe eyes the God of this World hath blinded, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. Inner darkneſs is the direct way to *utter darkneſs.*

3. The hypocritical Profeſſor ſhall be excluded the preſence of Chriſt. He that hath but the ſhadow of Holineſs, muſt expect a real Hell. If thou beareſt the Name of Chriſt, and art not partaker of the Divine Nature, thy Profeſſion (as *Uriahs* Letter to *Joab*) will but haſten thy Execution, *Job* 13. 16. *He* (i. e. God) *alſo ſhall be my Salvation, but an Hypocrite ſhall not come before him.* God will be the godly upright Souls Salvation, but not the Hypocrites. *He ſhall not dwell with God, Pſal.* 5. 4. No, not ſtand in his ſight, *Pſal.* 5. 5. Nay, not

not ſo much as come before him with any Comfort. He may come before good men with acceptance, as the fooliſh Virgins before the wiſe, who were ignorant of their Hypocriſie, but he ſhall not come before the Omniſcient God. When thoſe Virgins came which wanted Oil, the door was ſhut, *Matth.* 25. There was no entrance, no admiſſion for them. They had not received God into their Hearts (though he was often in their Lips) and he would not receive them into his Houſe; *The door was ſhut.*

CHAP. IX.

An Exhortation to flie from this wrath to come; with ſome helps thereunto.

2. IT may exhort us to take heed, that this ſeparation from Chriſt be not our portion. O, *Reader*, how much doth it concern thee, what-ever thou loſeſt, to make ſure of the preſence of Chriſt in the other World! Believe it, though thou canſt bear the loſs of an Eſtate,

Eſtate, or Friends, or Relations; yea, and the partial abſence of Chriſt in this World, yet the total loſs of Chriſt in the other World will be an intollerable loſs. They who live here chearfully without him, cannot do ſo there. When thou ſhalt be baniſhed from all thy Poſſeſſions, and all thy Relations, and all thy worldly Comforts, then alſo to be baniſhed from Chriſt, the Prince of Life, and Lord of Glory, and Conſolation of *Iſrael*, will be a woe with a witneſs.

Canſt thou read and hear the miſery of the wicked, in their total, eternal ſeparation from Chriſt, and not tremble, for fear it ſhould be thy portion, leſt thou ſhouldſt be of the number of them that ſhall hear that dreadful Voice, *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire.*

To this end, that thou mayſt eſcape this woful Condition of the Ungodly, obey theſe few Directions.

1. Believe and bewail your enmity againſt Chriſt. He loves you, yet by nature thou hateſt him, *Prov.* 8. *Rom.* 1. 31. *Rom.* 8. 7. Indeed he may ſay of thee

thee, and all others in thy Condition, *They hated me without a cauſe.* But thou doſt hate him, and thereby art wholly uncapable of his preſence. *Can two walk together unleſs they be agreed?*

This enmity of thine againſt Chriſt (which diſcovers it ſelf in thy daily Rebellions againſt his Laws, and Oppoſition to his Authority,) muſt be felt and lamented. There is little hope of their recovery, who are ſick unto death, and inſenſible thereof, *Matth.* 9. 12. ——*They that be whole need not the Phyſician, but they that are ſick.* Thy firſt work muſt be to know this plague of thine own heart; and to know it not notionally, as a Phyſician, by reading of it, or beholding it in others; but experimentally, as the Patient knoweth a Diſeaſe by feeling it, complaining of it, mourning for it, and longing to be freed from it.

Conſider with thy ſelf how impoſſible it is for thee to delight in the preſence of Chriſt, whom thou abhorreſt; and to take pleaſure in the Company of any, whom thy nature hath a reluctancy againſt.

2. Make Christ your Friend through Faith in his blood. There is no getting to Christ hereafter, but by coming to him here. Accept him now, and he will accept thee then. He will say to those that are now strangers to him, *Depart from me, I never knew you.* If thou dost not know him, and him crucified in this World, he will not know thee in the other World. Thou canst not rationally expect admission into his presence, if thou hast no acquaintance with his person. Strangers and Enemies are kept out, when Children, and those that are the Friends of the Master of the house are taken in. It is by Faith in his blood that thou canst be united to him, and made one with him; as the Wife is united to the Husband, and the Members to the Head, *Ephes.* 5. 27. *That he might present it to himself a glorious Church.* Ephes. 1. ult. *Which is the Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Ephes.* 3. 17. And being so made one with him, Husband and Wife, Head and Members shall be together for ever. *Where I am, there shall ye be also,* Joh. 14. 2,3. The great ground of Christs passion was,

was, to bring those that believe to God, and that they might abide with him eternally.

3. Follow after holiness. The holy Soul can only suit an holy Saviour, and therefore the holy Soul can only enjoy the holy Saviour. Two cannot walk comfortably together, unless there be an agreement in their dispositions. *Into the new* Jerusalem *can in no wise enter any thing that defileth, or is unclean,* Rev. 21. ult.

Heaven is an holy Hill, *Psal.* 15. 1. An undefiled Inheritance, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. The holiest or most holy place, *Heb.* 9. 8, 12. And therefore will admit of none but holy persons. Dogs must be without, when Children shall be taken within doors.

CHAP. X.

The poſitive part of the Sinners miſery, expreſt by Fire; *and why.*

I Come now to the ſecond part of the Puniſhment of the Wicked, and that is *Pœna ſenſus*, the poſitive part of their miſery, or that anguiſh which God will inflict on their Souls and Bodies. Which puniſhment is ſet forth:

1. By its extremity.
2. Eternity.

Εἰς τὸ πῦρ. I ſhall ſpeak firſt to its extremity, *Fire.* The Greek word πῦρ comes from the Hebrew *Ur*, and ſo the Latin *Uro*, *to burn*. From the Greek πῦρ comes *Pyrauſta*, a flie that lives in the fire, and dies out of it. Fire is uſed to deſcribe the pains of Hell, becauſe of the violent pain, and extream torture which it cauſeth. Whether it be a material fire, as *Auſtin* and *Bullinger* think; Or Metaphorical, as *Gregory* and *Calvin*, *i. e.* a pain equivalent thereunto; nay, much more grievous, as others imagine. But this is certain, no Racks or Engines of pain or

or misery here below are ſufficient to ſet forth thoſe Inſtruments of eternal death, which God hath prepared for the wicked in the other world. The wrath of God, which is the very dregs of the Cup that the damned ſhall drink, is called *Fire*, *Pſal.* 18. 8. Nay, God himſelf in this reſpect is called *a conſuming Fire*, *Heb.* 12. *ult.* *For our God is a conſuming fire.*

The Doctrine which I ſhall draw from this poſitive part of the Wickeds puniſhment ſhall be this.

Doct. 2. That the Wicked ſhall in the other world depart from Chriſt, into fire; *Depart from me into everlaſting fire.* They ſhall not only be ſtript of all good, *Depart from me*; but alſo be filled with all evil, *Into everlaſting fire.* Our Saviour in *Matth.* 18. 9. calls it *Hell fire.* And the Holy Ghoſt terms it, *The vengeance of the eternal Fire*, Jude, verſ. 7.

In the Explication of this Doctrine, I ſhall ſhew:

1. Why the poſitive puniſhment of the wicked is ſet out by *Fire?*

2. Wherein it exceeds our *Fire?*

For the former, the puniſhment of the damned reſembleth *Fire.*

1. In regard of its intenſion, and the extream pain and anguiſh it cauſeth. *Fire* is the moſt out-ragious and tormenting of all the Elements. *Nebuchadnezzar* thought to fright and fear men to purpoſe, with the threatning of a fiery Furnace. The fire in the Valley of *Hinnon*, wherein Children were offered as a Burnt-Offering to the Devil, was exquiſitely tormenting. But who can tell the pains of Hell? Thoſe fires are but dark ſhadows and repreſentations of this *Fire.* VVhat elementary or culinary fire is comparable to that *Fire.* *Phalaris* Bull, *Low-country* Racks, *Forreign* Strapadoes, are nothing; not ſo much as Flea-bites to the the fire of Hell.

The woful effect of it ſpeaks it terrible. It cauſeth weeping, wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth. The ſtouteſt heart will then be forced to weep like a Child for pain; the moſt reſolute ſturdy Spirit will wail and moan for anguiſh, and all will bite their fleſh, and gnaſh their teeth with envy. There *Cain* may cry out

out indeed, *My puniſhment is greater than I can bear.* For alas, *Who can dwell in everlaſting burnings?*

The infinite VViſdom that prepared it, ſpeaks it intollerable; *Prepared for the Devil and his Angels,* ἡτοιμασμένον, the word ſignifieth *Divinam deſtinationem*; 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. Heaven is prepared for the godly. *Matth.* 25. 35. And they for Heaven, *Rom.* 9. 23. *Col.* 1. 12. So wicked men are prepared for Hell, *Rom.* 9. 22. And Hell for them. As if God had from eternity conſulted and contrived the moſt exquiſite way and means of afflicting the Creature. As if his VVrath had ſet his infinite VViſdom and Power on work to deviſe the fitteſt materials for the puniſhment of the wicked, and the moſt cutting, killing Inſtruments of eternal death.

The Company in this place of Torment, will render it the more miſerable. *The Devil and his Angels*, thoſe frightful Fiends, and bitter Foes of Mankind, ſhall be his eternal Aſſociates. That curſed Crew which drew men to ſin, and tempted them ſo diligently, ſhall be tormented with them, and a torment to

them for ever. The word for Devil properly ſignifieth a Calumniator or Slanderer. He firſt ſlandred God to man, and then man to God; He is therefore call'd *the Accuſer of his Brethren*, Rom. 12. 11. Thoſe evil Angels have their Names either from their Natures, as Spirits; or Office, as Angels; or Dignity, as Principalities and Powers; or malice againſt God, as Satan, Devil; or their Fall and Fruits, as unclean Spirit, evil One, Father of Lyes, Murtherer, Deaf and Dumb Spirit. The Devil is mention'd ſingularly, becauſe there is one chief, *The Prince of Devils*, *Matth.* 12. And the reſt under him, or becauſe they are all one in Counſel, as if but one in Being. The chief Devil hath many other under him, at his call and command. This fire is ſaid *to be prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, becauſe they are the greateſt and chiefeſt of Sinners, others are but their Scholars. Now how hot is that Hell, that *Fire* which God from all eternity deviſed for the Devils, his moſt malicious Enemies? And how ill will they ſpeed, who have millions of ſuch dreadful

τῷ διαβόλῳ ἀπὸ τοῦ διαβάλλειν, becauſe he, ſtrikes through with his darts: καὶ τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ, as his Agents and Emiſſaries.

ful Devils for their everlasting Companions.

2. In regard of the universality of the pains it will cause. *Fire* hath all manner of Torments in it, and afflicts the whole man. If any be troubled extreamly with the Gout, or the Stone, or the Colick, or the Toothach, or any one racking Distemper, how dolefully doth he cry out and complain? But if all manner of Diseases should in extremity seise a man, and that in every part of him, how dreadfully would he weep and wail? The truth is, Colick, Stone, Cancer, Gout, Toothach, Pleurisie, St. *Anthonys* Fire, and all other, are included in this *Fire*. It hath not only extremity, but also universality of Torments; thick darkness for the Eyes, hideous yellowing for the Ears, loathsome brimstone for the Smell; and every sense molested and offended in the highest degree, every part tormented in flames.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The difference between our fires and Hell fire.

BUt the great pain of the wicked will more fully appear, if we consider the difference between our fires on Earth, and that in Hell.

1. They differ in the cause of their kindling. Our fires are kindled with cold Air, a puff of Wind; thus the spark is blown up into a flame. *But Tophet is prepared of old: for the King it is prepared: the pile thereof is fire and much wood, and the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it,* Isa. 30. 33. O what a flame is that which is blown up by the breath of an Almighty God. What a vast difference is there between the breath of man, or of a pair of Bellows, and the breath of a God? This breath is like a stream of brimstone; and if the breath that kindleth the fire be like a stream, or rather a Sea of brimstone, what is the fire it self? What a vast difference is there between the

the breath of a pair of Bellows, and the fire kindled by them.

2. They differ in their nature. Our fires are by Philosophers described to be a stream of sulphurous particles, or swarm of motes of brimstone, violently agitated, and forcibly breaking forth from those respective Bodies to which they did formerly belong. And this is apparent, because when any body is throughly burnt, the sulphurious parts are almost gone; and when those parts are gone, what remains will burn no longer. But the fire of Hell, whether it be material or metaphorical, is quite another thing. It is a deep impression of infinite wrath and fury on every member of the Body, and faculty of the Soul. *And O what a fearful thing is it to fall into the hands of the living God, for our God is a consuming fire,* Heb. 12. 2. ult. The wrath of God is sometimes compared to that of a Lion roaring after her prey, which tears, and rents, and kills, and slays, without the least pity. And to a Bear robbed of her Whelps, which claws, and wounds, and destroys whatsoever comes near her. But alas, the

wrath

wrath of a God is infinitely more cutting, more killing. The Mountains are moved, the Rocks are rent in pieces, the ſtouteſt Oaks are rooted up, the Foundations of the Earth tremble, the great Luminaries are darkned, the courſe of Nature is over-turned, when he is wroth. *Thou, even thou art to be feared, for who may ſtand when thou art angry.*

If his wrath be kindled but a little, how wofully do his own Children cry out, Job 6. 4. *The Arrows of the Almighty are within me*, Job 13. 24. *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and holdeſt me for thine enemy?* Pſal. 88. *Their Spirits are drunk up, while they ſuffer his terrors, they are diſtracted.* What then will be the condition of them on whom he will pour out all his wrath? If a ſmall degree of God's anger be ſo terrible, when it is mingled with Love; what will a full Cup of pure wrath be?

3. They differ in the ends of their Creation. Our fires were created for our Service and Comfort. God made theſe for the uſe and benefit of man, to fence us againſt the cold; to melt and mould metals, and form them into

ſeveral

ſeveral moulds, &c. But the fire of Hell is created for the torment of Men and Devils. God makes it of ſuch a nature, as may beſt ſuit his end. For every wiſe Agent fitteth his means to his end; and the more wiſe the Agent is, the more proper means he findeth out for his end. Now when the only wiſe God, to whom Angels themſelves are Fools, ſhall ſet his infinite Wiſdom awork about the moſt proper means of racking and torturing the poor Creature; ſurely it will be done to purpoſe. As when his Love ſets his Wiſdom awork, to find out a way to comfort his Children, what Rivers of Pleaſures, VVeights of Glory, Crowns of Life, fulneſs of Joy doth he provide. So when his wrath ſets VViſdom awork, to find out a way for the afflicting his Enemies, what ſtinging Adders, and gnawing VVorms, and Chains of Darkneſs, and Lakes of Brimſtone doth he provide.

4. They differ in the Fewel that feeds them. Our fires are maintain'd and preſerv'd in burning by wood or coals, or ſomewhat that is combuſtible; and the fire muſt be ſuitable to the meanneſs

neſs and limitedneſs of the fewel. But the fire of Hell is fed with the Curſe of a righteous Law, and the wrath of an infinite God, and the luſts of the damned. Ah what work will ſin, back'd with the Curſe and wrath of God, make in the Souls and Bodies of men. If *David* beloved of God under the weight of ſin, and ſenſe of Divine diſpleaſures, went mourning all the day, and cryeth out ſo mournfully, *Thine Arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore. There is no ſoundneſs, in my fleſh, becauſe of thine Anger, nor reſt in my bones becauſe of my Sin. Mine Iniquities are gone over mine head, as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me*, Pſal. 38. 2, 3, 4. O what will they ſuffer! and how will they roar and howl, whoſe Sins are as a Mountain of Lead, ſhall preſs and oppreſs their Conſciences! all whoſe luſts ſhall gnaw their Spirits, ſet home and cloſe to their Souls by the fury and malediction of God.

5. They differ in this, that our fires are accompanied with Light; but the fire of Hell, though it hath heat to torment, hath no light to comfort. It is

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a ſtate of darkneſs, *of utter darkneſs*, *Matth.* 25. *of blackneſs of Darkneſs*, Jude, verſ. 13. They have only light enough to ſee themſelves endleſly and eaſelelly wretched and miſerable. Darkneſs is dreadful, but what darkneſs like *utter darkneſs*, or *blackneſs of darkneſs*? The *Egyptians* did not move out of their places in the time of their darkneſs, but what will men do in the dark, in the midſt of ravenous VVolves, and roaring Lions, and ſtinging Adders, and fiery Serpents, and frightful Devils?

6. They differ in their Operations:

1. Our fires work only on the Body, they cannot pierce the Soul; but Hell fire pierceth the Soul. Spirits burn in it as well as Bodies, *Go into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* If it ſeiſe on Devils, it will alſo on the Souls of men. The Spirit whoſe ſenſes are moſt acute, will feel the greateſt pain in the unquenchable fire.

2. Our fires deſtroy and conſume their fewel; they turn their wood and coals into duſt and aſhes; the bodies of men are by them turn'd into aſhes, and hereby the pain ceaſeth with the life

life of the Creature. But the fire of Hell will never conſume, though it be ever conſuming, it will always be deſtroying, but never deſtroy the Sinner. The damned will be always dying, but never die. The Almighty hand of God will preſerve them, to undergo that wrath that is intollerable, and thoſe flames that are unquenchable.

CHAP. XII.

The fulneſs of wicked mens miſery, in that it's poſitive and privative, with ſome Cautions againſt it.

Uſe. LEarn hence the full miſery of the wicked in the other World. They ſhall not only be deprived of all good, in their baniſhment from the preſence of God, but alſo be afflicted with all evil, in their ſuffering the pains of Hell fire. The godly in the other World ſhall be perfectly bleſſed, in their freedom from all pœnal and all moral evil, and their fruition of all that is truly good, *for they ſhall ever be*

be with the Lord, who is an universal good. So the Wicked in the World to come shall be perfectly cursed, in the absence of what ever is comfortable, and in the presence of whatsoever is dreadful, and may render them miserable; Snares, Fire, Brimstone, an horrible Tempest, shall be rained on them as their portion; woful are the fruits of Sin oftentimes in this World. It keeps good from men here, strips them of their Estates, Relations, Liberties, Limbs, Health, Names; nay, of the Gospel, Ordinances, and seasons of Grace, and brings on them much evil here, Aches, Pains, Diseases in their Bodies, Horrors and Terrors in their Souls. But these are nothing to the effects of Sin in the other World. Here in the midst of Judgment, Mercy is remembred; there is no state on Earth of mear or pure wrath. All good things are not removed, nor all evil things inflicted on any. In the worst Estate there is Life, and that cloathed with some Favours. The pained have some intermission, or at least remission of their pains. In the lowest estate there is hope of better,

and that is no ſmall Cordial to a poor Creature; there is no Condition ſo bad, but might have been worſe, both for its intention and duration. But now in the other World, the wicked have Judgment without a mite of Mercy, and Miſery without any Eaſe; either in regard of degree or intermiſſion: All good baniſhed from them, and all evil inflicted on them.

Ex. If the wicked ſhall be thus puniſhed with the loſs of Chriſt, and the pains of Hell fire; it exhorts us to *flee from the wrath to come.* Ah who would ly one hour in flames for a Kingdom! How dreadful is the hearing of fire, fire, in the night? How doth the very ſound of it fright men and women? Ah then what will the feeling of it be in utter darkneſs, in that black long night of eternity! Sinner, when thou art tempted to ſin, conſider whether the ſatisfaction of thy Luſt will make thee amends for, and ballance the loſs of God, and thy ſuffering the flames of Hell.

Alas, how little is the pleaſure of Sin, but how terrible, how intollerable is the pain

pain of it! What wise man would be rack'd a day for a moments delight? much less suffer the wrath of an infinite God, for the dreggy pleasures of a Beast. Dost thou think thou canst bear it? art thou able to endure it? Canst thou suffer the pain of our fire? if not, how wilt thou endure the pain of that fire which the breath of a God kindleth, and keepeth burning? which tortures the Soul as well as the Body, and which was prepared of God for the afflicting and punishing his Creatures. O Friend, flie to Christ; if thou wouldst *flee from the wrath to come*, 1 *Thess.* 1, *ult.* He is the only skreen between thee and the fire of Hell. Flie from sin, if thou wouldst flie from Hell fire. Flie the Cause, and thou flieſt the Effect: Take away Sin, and you take away Hell. Whatsoever thou soweſt now, thou shalt reap hereafter; *Gal.*6.7. *Sow Lust, and reap the Lake that burns with fire and brimstone for ever.* Sow Holiness, and reap Happiness; *They who sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap Corruption: but they who sow to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting*, Gal. 6. 8.

CHAP. XIII.

The eternity of the Sinners misery in the other World, with the grand Reason of it.

I Come now to the eternity of the Sinners punishment, in that word *Everlasting.*

Τὸ αἰώνιον, The word is refer'd to God, and then is used for that which is eternal, *à parte ante*, or that never had a beginning. Sometimes it's refer'd to the rational Creature, and then signifieth an eternity, *a parte post*, or that which never hath an end. The word comes from αἰων, an Age, because what is everlasting, endureth through all Ages and Generations, and infinitely beyond them.

The Doctrine which I shall draw from this property of ungodly mens punishment shall be this.

Doct. 3. That the punishment of the wicked in the other World will be everlasting. It will not only be extream, in regard of its intention; but also eternal, in regard of its duration. Their pri-

privative puniſhment will be eternal: *They ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, from the preſence of the Lord*, 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 7, 8. And ſo will their poſitive puniſhment be, *Jude, verſ.* 7. *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the Cities about them are ſet forth, ſuffering the vengeance of the eternal fire. And Chriſt tells us, *There the worm never dieth, and the fire never goeth out*, Matth. 18. And again, it's called *the Lake that burns with fire and brimſtone for ever.*

It were no ſmall eaſe to the damned, if they had hopes of any end of their miſery; though after as many millions of millions of years as have been moments ſince the Creation, and as are Creatures ſmall and great in both worlds; but it may not be, it cannot be; after all theſe years they are not to remain one moment the leſs in Hell.

I ſhall only give the Reaſons of it, and proceed to the Uſe.

There are ſeveral Reaſons given why the Sinners temporal fault ſhould have an eternal puniſhment.

1. Some tell us, He refuſed eternal Life, and therefore it's but reaſon he

ſhould be puniſhed with eternal death. They had eternal pains and eternal pleaſures ſet before them, and they choſe eternal pains. In chooſing the way, they choſe the end; they choſe the way of the Fleſh, the way of their own Hearts, and ſo conſequentially they choſe Hell, to which that way led. Now if a man hath but his own choice, whom can he blame but himſelf? If a man have what he deſireth and loveth, if it be ill with him, he muſt thank himſelf. *He that ſinneth againſt me, wrongeth his own Soul: all that hate me, love death*, Prov. 8. ult, Jer. 4. 17, 18.

2. Others tell us, That if they ſhould live here for ever, they would ſin for ever; therefore God taking the will for the deed, puniſheth them for ever. They die eternally for ſin, who would have lived eternally in ſin. *Vellet ſine fine vivere ut poſſet ſine fine peccare*, Greg. Man would live here for ever, if he had his will, that he might ſin for ever. *Scotus* and *Aquinas* tell us, *Peccant in æterno ſuo & puniuntur in æterno Dei*: They ſin in their eternity, and God puniſheth them in his eternity. If God would give

give them an eternal abode on Earth, they would imploy it in disobeying and dishonouring him eternally. And because they would sin for ever, therefore they shall suffer for ever; *Jer.* 8. 5. The Children of *Israel* are shidden back with a perpetual back-sliding; *they hold fast deceit, and refuse to return.* How loath are they to forsake their Lusts: 1. They hold them fast. *As a Fountain sendeth forth water, so doth the Sinner send forth wickedness*, Jer. 6. 7. Now a Fountain sendeth forth water freely without constraint, and constantly without cessation. What any thing doth naturally, it doth easily and unweariedly. The Sun shines naturally, and he shines without any pains or tiresomeness. The Fountain sends forth water naturally, and doth it with ease and constancy. So the Sinner sins naturally, and doth it delightfully and unweariedly. When the Body and its members, the instruments of sin, are tired and worn out, and unable to execute the lusts of the flesh, the body of sin is still fresh and vigorous in plotting and conspiring evil, and in embracing and cherishing evil motions: whence it ap-

pears, that man sinning naturally would (if he lived) sin eternally, and thence say they, He is tormented for ever. But,

3. The principal Reason of the eternity of the Sinners misery, and indeed the only reason in my Judgment (with due respect to others) is the infinite demerit of sin, as committed against an infinite Majesty. Because the Sinner is not capable of bearing a punishment infinite in intension, therefore he must have it infinite in duration. I doubt not, but if the Sinner were able to bear the infinite stroak of Divine Justice (notwithstanding his will to sin for ever, and his choice of eternal death, and all the other reasons that are usually brought for the eternity of their pains,) he should not stay long in that prison of Hell, but quickly be released: But because a poor finite Creature hath not a back strong enough to bear an infinite blow, therefore he must be always suffering.

The notoriety and malignity of sin proceeds from the dignity of the Person against whom its committed, as I have largely

largely ſhewn elſe-where. Becauſe the Authority of an infinite God is diſpiſed, the Law of an infinite God diſobeyed, the Love of an infinite God undervalued, and the Image of an infinite God defaced by ſin, therefore there is an infinite demerit in ſin. In a Treatiſe called ; *The Incomparableneſs of God.* And becauſe man cannot give ſatisfaction infinite in value, therefore he muſt give that ſatisfaction which is infinite in time, or rather in its eternity, *Pſal.* 49. 7, 8. *Pſal.* 51. 4. *Job* 7. 20. And conſidering that God was reſolved to have full ſatisfaction for ſin, I conceive Chriſt himſelf could not have ſatisfied for the ſins of any, if he could not have offered a Sacrifice of infinite merit to anſwer the infinite demerit of ſin. But herein the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God did ſuperabound, in providing an Antidote ſtronger than the Poyſon; for whereas ſin is infinite, only *Objective*, as committed againſt an infinite God: The Sacrifie of Chriſt is infinite, both *Objective* and *Subjective*, as offer'd up to an infinite Majeſty, and offer'd by one that

was

was an infinite Majeſty; whoſe Perſon being infinite, rendred his Sacrifice of ſuch boundleſs value and merit.

CHAP. XIV.

How little cauſe to envy Sinners, and how careful we ſhould be to avoid their eternal miſery.

Uſe 1. WE may learn hence what little cauſe any have to envy Sinners their fat and ſweet in this World. Alas, for their poor ſhort pleaſures of ſin, they muſt have extream and eternal torments. Who would grudge them their portion, or eat of their Dainties, or buy their Bargains, that is not mad, and quite bereaft of his wits, *Prov.* 23. 17, 18. *My Son, envy not Sinners: for ſurely there is an end.* I, and a ſad end for poor Sinners. An end of Woe, and Wrath, and Death, and Miſery, without any end or eaſe. Ah what ſad Objects are they of Pity, who laugh a minute, and muſt weep for ever!

ever! who for a little gigling mirth, and poor drossy pleasures, must fry eternally in Hell flames among Devils and damned Spirits.

Ex. *Reader*, Believe and consider this misery of the Wicked, and be restless, till thou art secured against it. Ponder it well, to be among Devils, those stinging Serpents, roaring Lions, frightful Monsters, would make thy hair stand an end, and thy heart to ake; but to be amongst them in extremity of Torments, in fire, in fire kindled by the infinite wrath of God, and in universality of Torments, to have all kind of Judgments and Plagues inflicted on thee; I, and on every part of thy Body, and all the powers of thy Soul; and to suffer all this for ever, ever, ever. Canst thou bear the company of Lions, and Bears, and Wolves, and Adders, and Serpents, & the deformed Monsters here for ever? How then wilt thou bear the Company of Devils, hideous, monstrous, frightful Hell-hounds for ever? Thou canst not bear the pain of our fire for one day, no not for one quarter of an hour; how then wilt thou bear the pain of Hell fire

fire for ever? *Ah who can dwell in everlasting burnings!* who can endure abiding flames? The Patient in a violent fit of the Stone, or Colick, or Gout, supports himself with this Cordial, *This will not last long.* The Woman in labour, in the extremity of her pains, hath this to revive her, *All this, through the kindness of God, will soon be over.* The Primitive Christians comforted themselves under their dreadful Sufferings from their Persecutors, with this, *Our light Afflictions are but for a moment. They are black Clouds, but will soon pass over, and vanish away.* But, *Reader*, if once thou art turn'd into Hell, into those unconceivable intollerable flames, amongst those frightful Devils, thou canst have nothing to bear up thy Spirit, not the least hope of any cessation, or intermission, or remission of thy pains. Ah how will dispair, like a dagger, stab thee to the heart! what a cutting corosive will it be to think, I am here amongst horrid, hideous, hellish Devils, (who have been my Tempters, and are now my Tormentors,) banished the blissful presence of God and Jesus Christ,

Christ, suffering those torments, and pains, and misery, to which all the fires and racks on Earth are but as the rasing of skin to *Nebuchadnezzars* fiery Furnace. Ah what Tongue can tell what this poor Body suffereth in every part of it! Ah what Understanding can apprehend the anguish and remorse of this Soul, its cutting Reflections on what it hath been and done, and its killing prævision of what it must undergo, and I must endure all this for ever! Though my pains are so extream in their intention, yet if they were short in their duration, I had some ground of comfort; nay, if they were to last no more millions of years, than there are Stars in Heaven, and drops of water in the Ocean, I should have some crevis of light, some hope to bear up my heart: But alas, alas, I am here in the midst of this cursed Crew, under these extream ineffable pains, and must be here for ever. The wrath upon me is abiding wrath, *Joh. 3. ult.* It is wrath to come, and ever will be wrath to come. After Ages, and Generations, and millions of them; I, and millions of millions of them,

them, my pain would not be a moment the nearer a period. My night of darkness and horrour will be a long night indeed; the Clock will never strike, the time will never pass, the morn will never dawn, and the Sun will never rise. O what shall I do, thousands, and thousands of thousands, millions, and millions, of millions, of millions, signifie not a moment to my wretched and cursed eternity. Ah such company, such misery, and that for ever, ever, ever! *Reader*, doth not thy Soul tremble to think of this, which will be the portion (probably) of most in the Christian World; and wilt thou give thy self a moments rest, in a state liable and obnoxious to it? For the sake of thy precious Soul, if thou hast any true self-love, *Break off thy sins by Repentance, and thine Iniquities by accepting of thy Redeemer.* Hell hath not yet shut its mouth upon thee, nor is the gate of Mercy yet shut against thee. O bless the Divine Patience, and *know the things that concern thine own peace.*

Thy

Thy life is short and uncertain; when once death seiseth thee, thou art immediately fixed, there can be no change, no alteration of thy state. Tears, Prayers, Groans, Sighs, Sobs, will work nothing, prevail nothing with the Judge to alter his Sentence, or thy Condition. *Now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation.* Therefore, O Sinner, *Agree with thine Adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing,* Matth. 5. 25, 26. But having written largely of this in another Treatise, and intending to speak of it here only by way of Preface, to what I mainly intend, and now come to discourse of, and that is the Nature, Danger, Cause, and Curse of Sins of Omission; in the reasons of this severe Sentence, I shall speak no more thereof, but proceed to the third general part of the Text, and that is the reason.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

The reason of Christs severe Sentence, and a question resolved, whether the Righteous, by their Acts of Charity, do not deserve Heaven as well, as the Wicked, by their Omission thereof, deserve Hell.

Thirdly, THe reason of Christ's severe Sentence against them, *vers.* 42, 43. *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not: sick and in prison, and ye visited me not.*

The words have nothing of difficulty in them, and therefore I shall not waste time in the explication of them. Every one knows what it is not to give meat to the Hungry, or drink to the Thirsty, or Raiment to the Naked, *&c.* That it is the omission of a Duty, *viz.* Charity, which God commands, and also that Believers are the Members of Christ, *Ephes.* 1. *ult.* Christ mystical, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. And therefore what injuries are done

done to them, are done to Christ, *Act.* 9. Only it may be needful to speak to these two particulars, before I raise the Doctrine.

1. Whether there be not the like ground of the Salvation of the blessed that there is of the damnation of the wicked; namely, the merit of their works. Both seem to speak it, *Come ye blessed*, &c. *For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat.* Again, *Go ye cursed*, &c. *For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat?* &c.

2. Why Christ will try men at the great day by the performance or neglect of this Duty of Charity, and not rather by their performance or neglect of Prayer, Hearing, Watchfulness, or some other Duty, or by their Humility, Heavenly-mindedness, Patience, Temperance? *&c.*

In answer to the first, though *Bellarmine* affirms, There is the same reason in each, and *Cornel. A Lapide*, with the rest of the Papists, concur therein, yet if they were not wilfully blind, they might see enough in the Text to disprove them.

1. In that Christ calls to the blessed *to inherit the Kingdom*, κληρονομῆσαι τὴν βασιλείαν, which word signifieth *Hæreditatis jure possidere*, to enjoy a thing by right of Inheritance, from Parents and Ancestors, and not by right of Purchase, or deserving; therefore Heaven is often called κληρονομία, *an Inheritance*, *Col.* 1. 12. *Ephes.* 1. 14. 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. So the Type of it, the Land of *Canaan* is often called by the 70, probably from the division or distribution of the Land by lot to them, *Josh.* 14. 2. which to a word is the import of the word. Now they who enjoy an Estate by right of Sonship, do not possess it by Merit. What can a Child who may inherit his deceased Fathers Estate in his Child-hood or Infancy do to deserve that Estate.

A κλήρος & νέμω. Lexicon νέμω, Distribuo quia hæreditates olim per sortem distribui solebant.

2. In that Christ tells them, *That this Kingdom was prepared for them before the foundation of the World.* Now what could they do before they had a Being to deserve this Inheritance. And the Apostle is positive, that all is to be referred to the Purpose of God, not to the piety of any men. *For* (saith he) *the Children being not yet born, neither having*

having done any good or evil, that the Purpoſe of God according to Election might ſtand, (mark) *not of works, but of him that calleth. It was ſaid unto her, The Elder ſhall ſerve the younger,* Rom. 9. 11, 12. Eph. 1. 4. Rev. 13. 8.

If it be Objected, That God foreſaw that they would improve their Free will unto the performance of ſuch good Works, whereby they would deſerve Heaven, and therefore choſe them to Heaven, which the Papiſts ſtand much upon. I anſwer,

1. The fore-ſight of their Faith and good Works cannot be the cauſe of their Election, becauſe their Election is by God himſelf declared to be the cauſe of their Faith and good Works. If their Faith and Obedience be the effect of Election, they cannot be the cauſe of it; but ſo they are, *Joh.* 6. 37. *All that the Father hath given me ſhall come to me,* i. e. believe on me. Again, *As many as were ordained to eternal life believed,* Act. 13. 48. So for good Works, *Joh.* 15. 13. *Eph.* 1. 4. *Rom.* 8. 30.

2. Then mans will muſt be the ground of God's Actions, not his own Will.

The Scripture tells us, *That God worketh all things after the Counſel of his own will*, Epheſ. 1. 11. But ſay the Papiſts in Election, *God worketh according to the improvement of mans will.*

3. Then the accompliſhment of God's Decree depends upon the mutable and uncertain will of man, ſo that there is a poſſibility that God may be diſappointed of his Choice, and his Elect of that Happineſs to which they are choſen, if both depend on a changeable Creature. But the word of God ſpeaks the contrary, that God cannot be fruſtrated of his Choice, *Pſal.* 33. 10. *The Counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all Generations.* His Decrees are ſure, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. though his ſentence may be alter'd, *Jer.* 18. 7, 8, 9, 10. Nor can the Elect be diſappointed, *Matth.* 24. 24. *If it were poſſible, they would deceive the very Elect.* Here the impoſſibility of their ſeduction is grounded on the ſtability of their Election.

4. Then there can be no Election of Infants to everlaſting life. I mean, of ſuch as God fore-ſeeth or ordaineth to die in their infancy, becauſe God cannot fore-

fore-ſee that theſe will improve the liberty of their wills unto Faith and Repentance. That Infants may be ſaved, is clear, *Matth.* 19. 14. *Suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven.* *Matthew* calls them παιδία, *Luke* βρέφη, the firſt word ſignifieth *Puerulus*, a little Child, one, ſay the *Criticks*, that is in the firſt ſeven years of his Age. But the latter, *Luke* 18. 15. ſignifieth Infants newly born, or ſucking Babes. Now if of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven, then they may be ſaved. But none are ſaved, ſave ſuch as are elected; therefore without any fore-ſight of Faith or good Works, rational Creatures may be elected, *Rom.* 8. 30. *Rom.* 11. 7.

5. If fore-ſight of mens Works be the cauſe of their Election, then man hath whereof to glory. He is then the cauſe of his own Salvation. Election is the Original of all, a ſpring that runneth under ground for a time; firſt bubleth up and diſcovers it ſelf in effectual Calling, ſo glideth along in a life of Faith & Holineſs, and at laſt emptieth it ſelf in the Ocean of Peace, and Joy, and Happineſs:

So that if man be the Cause of his Election, then he may thank himself for his Salvation. *John* is no more beholden to God than *Judas*, for 'tis the improvement of the freedom of his Will which brings him to Heaven. God did as much for *Judas* (say they) as for *John*. But how contrary is this to the word of Truth? *Rom.* 4. 2. *But if* Abraham *were justified by Works, he had whereof to glory.* The Scripture speaks in another Dialect, *By Grace ye are saved, through Faith, not of Works, lest any man should boast*, Eph. 2. 4, 5. The Knife with which *Adam* cut his own Throat, and wherewith he murther'd his Posterity, was Pride. He would hold of himself, and not of God. The wise and gracious God, in the way he hath taken for our Recovery, is pleased to lay this Knife as far as may be out of our way, lest we be ruin'd by it a second time: Though this Pride, the Popish Doctrine of Merits, and fore-sight of good Works maintains; but God tells us, Man is nothing, and God all in all; *that no flesh might glory in his presence*, 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28, 29.

6. The

6. The Holy Ghost gives us the true ground or motive of Election, far differing from this of the Papists, and that is the Will and Pleasure; *Having predestinated us according to the good Pleasure of his Will*, Ephes. 1. 5. *Being predestinated according to the purpose of him*, vers. 11.

Rom. 9. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth.*

Matth. 11. 26. *Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

2 Tim. 1. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy Calling; not according to our work, but according to his own Purpose and Grace which was given us in Christ before the world begun.* Again, the Particle *For, enim*, γὰρ is counted causal, not that always it noteth the Cause, but sometimes a Reason or Argument, whether taken from the Cause or Effect, *Matth.* 1. 18. *Matth.* 15. 14. 2 *Tim.* 2. 7. Besides this is sufficient for parity of reason, or the resemblance, that as some go by the way of good Works to Heaven, so others by the way of evil Works to Hell. Good Works are not ποιητικά, Piscat. in Loc.

ceu causa salutis sed [illegible], *respectu fidei & finis ejus, vitæ æternæ*, Glass. not the cause of reigning, but the way to the Kingdom. Once more, Let the Papists shew the same proportion between a few imperfect defective good Works, which men are enabled to do by the help of God, and the unconceivable eternal Joys and Glory of Heaven that is between the evil works of men, and the endless pains of Hell, and then let them plead their merits. They may, if they please, observe, that the Saints themselves are so far from pleading their Merits, or boasting their deserts, that they hardly remember that they ever did those Works which Christ proclaims to their praise, and rewards through his own blood with a Kingdom. *Lord, when saw we thee hungry or thirsty?* &c. O what a vast difference is there between an upright humble Christian, who acknowledgeth himself *less than the least of all Gods mercies*, and a proud Papist that dares say, *Cœlum gratis non accipiam.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Why Christ will try men at the Great Day by acts of Charity.

THe second question to be discussed before I proceed to the Doctrine, is, why Christ tryeth men at that day by the neglect or performance of Charity, and not of some other Duty, as hearing, praying, watching, *&c.* Or by their Patience, Humility, Temperance, or Heavenly-mindedness? *&c.* To this I answer,

These Works of Charity are by a Synechdoche put for new Obedience, and all the good works of a Christians life. Though Christ mention those as the test of men at that day, yet he doth not hereby exclude others. The Scripture abundantly proveth, that other Graces and Duties shall be rewarded at that day, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7. *Matth.* 10. 18. *Heb.* 6. 10, &c. and that men shall be condemned for other sins beside the neglect of Charity. The want of the Wedding-Garment, *Matth.* 22. 12, 13. Unprofitableness in the improvement of Ta-

Talents, *Matth.* 25. 30. We have a Bed-Roll of other sins condemning, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. *Rev.* 21. 8. Indeed every sin, any sin that men have lived in, and loved, who have died impenitent, will be found damnable at that day.

It cannot rationally be supposed, that the performance or neglect of those outward acts of Charity should be the general test, (I mean of all) for how then shall those that die in their Infancy and Childhood, or such as are extreamly poor be tried, who are rendred wholly uncapable of feeding the Hungry, or cloathing the Naked. Neither do I judge it shall be the sole test, for it's possible for a man in these outward acts to be bountiful to men, who hath no regard or fear of God in him. The Apostle supposeth a man *may give all his Goods to the poor*, and yet be void of true love to the poor, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. It's unquestionable, that the Worship of the blessed God is much more excellent than our kindness to the Children of men (as *Calvin* well observeth on the Text) yet Christ who knoweth the hearts of all men, and from what principles they act,

will

will mention the Saints acts of Charity at that day, and reward them accordingly, and will mention the Sinners omission of Charity at that day, and condemn him for it.

1. Because acts of Charity are more obvious and apparent to the World. Though the Christian usually is close therein, and will not let his left hand know what his right hand doth; yet Charity, like Musk, will discover it self. The Objects thereof will publish their Benefactors; and he himself thinks it needful sometimes to be open and publick in his liberality (though not for self-ostentation, yet) for others imitation. *Luther* tells us, That Christ will try men this way, because the World shall justifie his Sentence both of reward and punishment. If a man be charitable, all his Neighbours take notice of it; yea, commonly love him for it; the vilest of them will commend him, though by his holy Conversation he condemns them. I suppose this is the good man of whom the Apostle speaks, when he tells us, *That for such a one a man will even dare to die*, Rom. 5. Therefore when Christ shall

shall acknowledge the Charity of his people, and then reward them with himself; the wicked Neighbours of these men will confess the truth thereof, and their Consciences will force them to consent thereto. Again, there is hardly a Muckworm, whose Motto is, To have, and to hold, to heap, and to hoard up, who will as soon part with his blood, as any thing considerable to the poor; but all his Neighbours, good and bad, observe him, speak of him, and generally condemn him for his earthly-mindedness. So that when Christ at the Great Day shall accuse him, they will be forced to attest the truth of that Accusation, and when Christ at that day shall condemn him, they cannot but agree to the Sentence; *Psal.* 52. 6, 7. *The Righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him. Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength: but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthned himself in his wickedness.*

2. Because these acts of Charity are signes of Faith and Love, to which Graces Heaven is promised, *James* 1. 12. *James* 2. 5. *Joh.* 3. 16, 17, *ult.* Christ who

who knoweth the Heart, understandeth from what inward root our outward fruit springeth; and therefore Faith and Love, which are the Fountain of true Charity, *James* 2. 15, 16, 17. being inward and secret, he mentions what is more open and known, as a sign and testimony of that faith in him, and love to him, which are invisible and unknown to the World. Faith is a Grace seated in the heart, *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness*; (where, by heart, I suppose is understood the *Understanding* and *Will*; for Faith, *in habitu*, is in each; and *in exercitio*, an act of both.) And the heart is called *an hidden man*, 1 *Pet.* 3. But it discovers it self to the Believer by love. For when once the Soul applieth Christ for Pardon and Life, and begins to hope for those great and good things which Christ hath purchased for him, and promised to him; this Faith kindleth an holy flame of Love in the affections to Christ, and hereby the Soul understands that he is a true Believer beloved of God; for our Love is but the reverberation of God's Love back again to himself, 1 *Joh.* 4. 19.

And

And then Faith discovers it self to others, by these fruits and effects of love to God, *i.e.* feeding the Hungry, and cloathing the Naked. St. *Paul* tells us, *That Faith works by love*, as its Tool or Instrument, *Gal.* 5. 6. Love to God produceth love to his Saints, and love to the Saints will draw out the hand, and heart, and purse to relieve them in their wants, 1 *Joh.* 3. 17. Love is costly and expensive, thinks nothing too much or too good for its Beloved. *Mary*'s Box of Oyntment is very precious, but not too precious for her Lord. Life is worth all the World, yet laid down for a Christian at the command of Love, 1 *Joh.* 3. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.*

3. Because practical godliness, of which Charity is a part, will be that by which men shall be tried at the Great Day; our Lord Jesus doth hereby declare, That it is not the Profession, but the practice of Religion, that will be enquired into by the Judge of quick and dead. It is not saying, *Be thou fed, and be thou cloathed*; without giving wherewith to be fed and cloathed: But it is feeding

feeding the Hungry, and cloathing the Naked, that shall be rewarded. Good words may please our selves, but good works only please God, and profit our own Souls. *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.* It's the doing, not the talking Christian that hath the promise of Heaven, *Matth.* 7. It's the practical, not the verbal Christian, that hath a right to Heaven through the precious blood of Christ, and the gracious promise of God; *Rev.* 22. 14. *Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the City.* It is the real, not the nominal Christian, that is prepared for heaven. None are fit to do the will of God in heaven, but those who have been accustomed to do the Will of God on Earth. There is a *making meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in light*, Col. 1. 12. A young man by the School, is made meet for the University; and a Christian by practical Holiness, is fitted for eternal Happiness.

Our

Our Redeemer would hereby declare, That all shews and shadows of Godliness, all gaudy Professions, and curious flourishes of Religion, if void of good Works, though as Gloworms, they shine somewhat in the dark night of this World, yet in the long day of eternity they will all vanish and disappear. God will not then examine who hath been the greatest Talker of his Will, but the greatest Walker in his Way; nor who hath been the best Speaker, but who hath been the best Doer. *For whoso looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful Hearer, but a doer of the Work; this man shall be blessed in his deed*, Jam. 1. 25. Hearing the Word, without doing the Work it commands, brings no blessing. The life and substance of Religion consists in practising what is good, and not in praising what is good. It consists in Scripture-Duties, not in Scripture Phrases.

4. Because Christ would hereby publish to the World, the great respect he hath for Charity; therefore he tells us, He will take special notice of his Saints Charity

rity at that day. Charity, whether in relieving the Oppreſſed, or comforting the Sorrowful, or counſelling the Doubtful, or ſupporting the Feeble, or feeding the Hungry, or viſiting the Sick, or cloathing the Naked, is highly eſteemed of Chriſt. To what Duty hath he annexed more or larger Promiſes, *Matth.* 5. 7. *Pſal.* 18. 25. *Eccleſ.* 11. 1, 2. *Pſal.* 41. 1. *Pſal.* 112. 1. *Iſa.* 58. 12. He ſpeaks of it, as if very much of Religion did conſiſt in it, and almoſt all of it. *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is to viſit the Fatherleſs and the Afflicted*, James 1. ult. He ſlights our moſt ſevere Duties, (thoſe which are moſt irkſome to the fleſh) if this be wanting, *Pſal.* 58. 7, 8, 9, 10. He limits his own Mercy to the merciful, 2 *Sam.* 22. 25. *James* 2. 13. *He is himſelf a merciful High Prieſt*, Heb. 5. *He had compaſſion on the ignorant, and thoſe that were out of the way*, Heb. 5. 2. *On thoſe that had nothing to eat*, Matth. 15. 32. *On thoſe that were ſcattered as ſheep without a Shepheard*, Matth. 9. 36. Therefore he cannot but value exceedingly, and love tenderly thoſe that are like

him. That which lieth so near his heart, must needs be enquired after, as much, if not more than any thing else. And there is scarce any thing that speaks our respect of persons or things, more than our enquiry after them. *Joseph* loved his Father *Jacob* dearly, I suppose far above all his Kindred, and therefore he first enquires after him. *Is your Father well, the old man of whom ye spake?* Gen. 43. 27. *David's* heart was set on *Absolom*, therefore when the Messenger return'd from the Battel, he doth in the first place, and in a special manner enquire after him. *Is the young man* Absolom *safe?* 2 Sam. 18. Thus Christ being so infinitely taken with Charity, cannot but make a great enquiry after it at the Great Day. It is fruit that will then abound to the Saints account, *Phil.* 4. 17. And such Seed, that they who sow it liberally, shall reap it liberally, 2 *Cor.* 9. 6.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Three particulars about the Text.

I Come now ſomewhat cloſer to the Reaſon of the Sentence; *For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat*, &c. Here we muſt underſtand:

1. *Obſerv.* That the omiſſion of inward Charity is included in this of outward, and will be as dangerous, if not more at the Great Day. The ſubject of it, the Soul is much more noble than the Body; therefore to ſuffer a Soul to periſh through our neglect of giving it ſpiritual Alms is a greater ſin, than to ſuffer the outward man to periſh for want of bodily Alms. Again, the end of ſpiritual Alms is higher, (than of bodily) the eternal Salvation of the Soul, 1 *Pet.* 1. 9. *Receiving the end of your Faith, the eternal ſalvation of your Souls.* Both ſorts of Charity are comprehended into theſe two verſes.

Viſito, Poto, Cibo Redimo, Tego, Colligo, Condo;
Conſule, Caſtiga, Solare, Remitte, Fer, Ora.

2. *Obſerv.* That other Works, beſide Works of Charity, and other Omiſſions, beſide the Omiſſion of this Duty, will be mentioned at that Day, and men ſhall be judged according to them. Indeed all our Works will be then accounted for. But you will ſay, What time will this take up. I anſwer, It ſeems probable, that the day of Judgment may laſt longer than moſt imagine. The Holy Ghoſt tells us, *That God will bring every Work into Judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good? or whether it be evil?* Eccleſ. 12. ult. If every Work, then more than acts of Charity; and if every Work good or bad, open or ſecret, then the day of Judgment muſt be a long day. The Apoſtle ſpeaks the ſame as to the matter of Judgment, with the wiſe man, *We muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 5. 10.

There are two of our eminent *Engliſh* Divines now with God, who have left their Judgment herein upon Record. One tells us, I humbly conceive, That the day of Judgment ſhall not be paſt over in an inſtant, but ſhall be of long con-

continuance. For if Christ should judge only as God, he could dispatch it in an instant; but his judging us men will be after the manner of men, that the Creature may understand, admire, and approve what is done. The other saith, It must take up some large quantity of time to manifest all the secret sins of men; and therefore it may be made evident both from Scripture and Reason, that this Day of Christs Kingly Office, in judging the world, shall last happily longer than the day of Christs private Administration now in governing the World.

Mr. *Strong* in a Serm. on 2 *Cor.* 5.10.p.26.

Mr. *Shepherds sound Content.* p.88.

Austin tells us, *Per quot dies hoc judicium extendatur incertum est, Scripturarum more diem poni solere pro tempore nemo nescit.*

Austin, *De Civit. Dei*, lib. 20. cap. 1.

3. *Observ.* Christ doth not say, Ye took my Meat from me, or wrong'd me of my Raiment, or persecuted me, and cast me into Prison; *But I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; naked, and ye cloathed me not; in prison, and ye visited me not.* He doth not say, I was hungry, and naked, and sick, and instead of relieving, ye derided me, and by your

taunts and jears, added Affliction to the afflicted, or ye deſpiſed and condemned me, as they, *James* 2. 6. *But I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat*, &c. It was a bare omiſſion of a neceſſary Duty for which they are ſentenced to Hell. It's not robbing, but not relieving; not oppreſſing them with violence, but not ſupplying their neceſſities which Chriſt here condemneth them for.

Theſe words conſider'd thus relatively, as the reaſon of Chriſts ſevere Sentence, will afford us this Doctrine which I chiefly intend.

CHAP. XVIII.

That ſins of Omiſſion are dangerous and damnable.

Doctrine. That ſins of Omiſſion are dangerous and damnable, or Chriſt will ſentence men at the Great Day to eternal puniſhment of loſs and ſenſe, for not feeding the Hungry, and cloathing the Naked. Obſerve how naturally the Doctrine floweth from

from the Text, *Depart ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirſty, and ye gave me no drink*, &c. The ſin mentioned is a bare omiſſion, and the Sentence clearly ſpeaks the puniſhment: Hence I gather, *That ſins of Omiſſion are damnable.* Chriſt will ſentence men to Hell for them. *Saul*'s not ſlaying *Agag*, (an omiſſion) loſt him the Kingdom, 1 *Sam.* 15. 20, 26. The *Moabites* and *Ammonites* were excluded the Sanctuary of God (an high and ſpecial Priviledge) to the tenth Generation, for an omiſſion, for not meeting *Iſrael* with bread and water in the Wilderneſs, *Deut.* 33. 4.

But it's as clear, theſe ſins bring eternal as well as temporal pains and puniſhment. The ſlothful Servant is ſentenced, and ſent into utter darkneſs, where is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, for a bare omiſſion, for not improving his Talent, *Matth.* 25. 24, *to* 31. The Servant did not waſte his Talent by Riotouſneſs, as the Prodigal did, (for he tells his Lord, *v.* 25. *Lo, here is thine,*) only omit to improve it through idleneſs. But he who wanted

hands to work, had fetters provided for hands and feet. And he who would not work by the light, is rewarded with utter darkneſs.

Again, we have a clear and full proof of the Doctrine, in *Matth.* 3. 10. *And now alſo the Ax is laid to the root of the Trees: therefore every Tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and caſt into the fire.* In the verſe we have three parts conſiderable:

1. the *Sin*, and that is a bare omiſſion, the not bringing forth good fruit. Our Saviour ſpeaks the ſame in *Matth.* 7. 19. He doth not ſay, Every Tree that bringeth forth evil fruit is hewn down, that bringeth forth Drunkenneſs, or Robbery, or Uncleanneſs, or unſavory Communication, *&c.* is caſt into the fire; *But every Tree that bringeth not forth good fruit.* The ſin is only a neglect of poſitive holineſs.

2. The ſeverity of the puniſhment is, hewn down, and caſt into the fire. The hewing down, is the fitting and preparing the Sinner for the fire; as the Tree cut down, is prepared for burning. This is done by their provoking God to leave them

them to impenitency, under the miniſtry of the Word. The Word is compared to a *Sword*, Epheſ. 6. 17. *A two-edged Sword*, Rev. 1. 16. And it will cut, and hack, and hew to purpoſe, *Hoſ.* 6. 5. *God heweth them by his Prophets, and ſlays them by the word of his mouth. It cuts to the heart*, Act. 4. 54. Act. 5. 33. And hath dreadful effects on them, *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. *And he ſaid, go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but underſtand not; ſee ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the hearts of this people fat, and make their Ears heavy, and ſhut their Eyes; leſt they ſee with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and underſtand with their Hearts, and convert, and be healed.*

And this hewing them down is alſo by death. The Ax of death fells the Tree for the fire of Hell. The rotten Tree, or the barren Tree, is not good for fruit, therefore for the fire.

He is hewn down, and caſt into the fire. Abſciſſion is the way to perdition, to eternal burning. This is the Cataſtrophe of the barren Trees Tragedy.

3. The certainty of it. Both Chriſt and the *Baptiſt* ſpeak of the puniſhment in the

the present Tense, not the Future, *Is hewn down, and cast into the fire*; not, shall be hewn down, &c. The fruitless person shall as certainly be in Hell, as if he were there already; therefore promises and threatnings, though future, are delivered to us as present. As, *to us a Son is born*, Isa. 9. 6. *Isa.* 21. 9. *Babylon is fallen.*

4. The universality of the Persons, *Every Tree that bringeth not forth good fruit.* Every man, what ever his Profession may be, or his Hopes are, or his Priviledges have been, *if he bring not forth good fruit, he is hewn down, and cast into the fire.* The Doctrine being thus proved by Scripture, I shall proceed to the Explication of it in several particulars.

1. I shall speak to the nature of them, and shew what sins of Omission are.

2. To the danger of them.

3. To the Reasons why they are so damnable.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

The nature of sins of Omission in general.

First, CONcerning the first, *i. e.* the nature of them. I shall speak to one more generally, and two more particularly.

1. By the several distinctions of these Sins.

2. By their agreement with, and difference from sins of Omission.

1. More generally, a sin of Omission is a neglect of some Duty commanded us in the Word of God.

In every Command, there is a Precept and a Prohibition. A Precept enjoyning, and a Prohibition forbidding. A Precept enjoyning some Duty, and a Prohibition forbidding the contrary. The neglect of doing what the Precept enjoyns, is a sin of Omission, and the doing what the Precept forbids is a sin of commission.

The truth is, in every Commission there is an Omission; as in every deadly Disease somewhat of a Feavor. For in every

every Commission, as in Drunkenness, or Oppression, or Uncleanness, there is a neglect or omission of the Duty commanded, as Temperance, Charity, and Chastity. But those we most properly call sins of Omission, which are extrinsicate from sins of Commission; as not praying, not reading the Word, not believing, not feeding the hungry, *&c.* But to speak strictly, there is no sin but sins of Omission; for all sin consists in privation of due rectitude or deficiency, and coming short of the rule. Though the Commands are generally deliver'd by way of negation, partly because of the proneness of men to commit those sins that are forbidden, and God would by his Negative command, curb, and keep them in. Thou shalt not, *&c.* thou shalt not, *&c.* partly because Negative Commands bind more strongly than the Affirmative. The Affirmative *obligant semper*, but not *ad semper*; but the Negative bind *semper & ad semper*, as the School-men speak. The Affirmative bind us always, (*i. e.* there is no time wherein it can be said that they are of no force,) but not to all times. I

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am always bound to pray, but I am not bound to pray at all times; I am bound always to speak truth, but I am not bound to speak all truth at all times. But Negative Commands bind always, and at all times; as, *Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit Adultery.* These bind every moment of a mans life, I mean every moment of his life these sins are to be forborn; they are at no time lawful: Though, I say, the Commands are deliver'd Negative for the most part, (*viz.* eight of them,) yet we must understand, that all the Negative Commands of God include their Affirmative; as, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*; this includes, thou shalt have me for thy God, thou shalt know me, love me, fear me, trust me, and worship me as thy God. And when God saith, *Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image*, &c. this includes, thou shalt Worship me according to my Will, revealed in my Word. When God saith, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*; this includes, thou shalt use reverently all my Names, Titles, Attributes, Ordinances, Word and Works.

Works. When God saith, *Thou shalt not kill*; this includes, thou shalt use all lawful means for the preservation of thine own and thy Neighbours life. When God saith, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*; this includes, thou shalt by all just ways maintain thine own and thy Neighbours Chastity, in thought, word, and deed. When God saith, *Thou shalt not steal*; this includes, thou shalt be true, faithful, and just in all thy Contracts and Dealings with others, restore what is ill gotten, be diligent in thy Calling, and endeavour the furtherance of thy own and thy Neighbours estate by all just ways. When God saith, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy Neighbour*; this includes, thou shalt to thy power promote truth in thy self and others, maintain thine own and thy Neighbours good Name. When God saith, *Thou shalt not covet*, &c. this includes, thou shall be fully satisfied with thine own Condition, and desire and delight in thy Neighbours prosperity. Thus the Negative Commands of God include their Affirmative, so that to depart from the evil forbidden, is not to keep

keep these Laws, unless also we practise the Duties commanded. The neglect of any of them is a sin of Omission.

CHAP. XX.

Three distinctions about sins of Omission.

2. I Shall speak more particularly, and explain these sins:

1. By these distinctions.

2. By their agreement with, and difference from sins of Commission.

First, These sins of Omission are to be distinguished in regard of substance, manner or measure.

1. When a duty is omitted in regard of the matter of it, as when men pray not, give not to the Poor, hear not the VVord, *&c.* these omit the substance of the Duty. Of such as these God complains, *There is none that looketh after God*, Rom. 3. 11. And again, *They will will not hear the Law of the Lord*, Isa. 30. 9. *And he that turneth away his Ears from the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard*, Prov. 21.

21. 13. These are most deeply guilty before God. They shew their utter contempt of him, and openly manifest it to others; when they omit to relieve the Poor, to pray in their Families, or to attend publick praying and preaching; hereby they are scandalous and offensive. They grieve the godly, *Rivers of tears run down mine eyes, because the wicked forsake thy Laws*, Psal. 119. and they harden the wicked. When ungodly men see others neglect all Religion, they are encouraged in their Atheism and Irreligion; and presuming others are wise, and that themselves shall fare as well as others. As it was said of those, *Ezek.* 13. 21. so it may be said of these; *They strengthen the hands of the wicked.* Again, these are guilty in all respects; they who offend in the matter of a Command, by neglecting the Duty it self in the substance thereof, offend in the manner and measure also; but they who offend in the manner and measure, may not offend in the matter.

2. When the omission is in regard of the manner of the duties performance;

mance; As when men do pray, but they pray not *uprightly*, with the heart, *Jer.* 12. 2. *Thou art nigh their mouths, but far from their reins.* Nor *earnestly*, with their whole heart, and with all their heart, and all the powers of their Souls, as the Precept is, *Jer.* 29. 13. and that Prayer to which the Promise is annexed, *James* 5. 16. But pray (as if they pray'd not) formally, and customarily, and carelesly; scarce hearing themselves, and no wonder then if God hear them not; they pray not *reverently*, with the aw of God upon their Spirits, but are rash in their words, and irreverent in their hearts, *Eccles.* 5. 1, 2. So when men give Alms, but do not give chearfully, with a free, willing, ready heart; *For God loves a chearful giver*, 2 Cor. 9. 17. Nor seasonably, when it may do most good, *Prov.* 3. 18. *Say not to thy Neighbour, Go and come again to morrow, when thou hast it by thee.* So when men hear the Word, but hear not *awfully*, in the fear of God, as in the presence of God, *Acts* 10. 33. *We are all here present before God, to hear all things commanded thee of God:* Neither hear

believingly, giving their assent to what they hear, and applying it to their own Souls. *The Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it*, Heb. 4. 2. These, and such like, though they are not guilty of omission, in regard of the matter of a Duty; yet they are guilty of omission, in regard of the manner of it; though they do the thing commanded, yet they do it not as it is commanded, and so are guilty of the breach of a positive Law and Command.

3. When the omission is in regard of the measure of the Duty; As when a man gives Alms, but not answerable to his Estate; though God hath filled his Belly with hidden treasures, and waters of a full Cup are wrung out to him, and he is able to give pounds to poor indigent Families, he puts them off with a few pence, or at most shillings, this is an omission in regard of the measure. God expects charitable Contributions from men answerable to his Bounty to them, 1 *Cor.* 16. 2. *Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there*

there be no gatherings when I come. According to the measure of the Divine Mercy to us, such should be the measure of our Charity to others. According to the seed thrown into the Earth, is the Crop return'd by the good ground. Therefore to make scanty Returns, when we have large Receipts, is a sin of omission: So when men pray, but not with that frequency which they might and ought. The Command is, *To pray continually, to pray without ceasing, to pray evermore:*

Which must include at least frequent, *i. e.* daily prayer, each Morning and Evening; but some men pray, but it's only at certain seasons, now and then, by fits and starts: Some pray only upon the Lords-Days, as if they had liberty all the working-days to be Atheists, and neglect the owning of the great God. Others pray only under some Affliction; and as Patients to their Physitian, never go to God, but when they cannot tell what to do without him. So the *Jews, In their Affliction, they will seek me early,* Hos. 5. 15. *When he smote them, then they sought him, but their heart was not*

right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant, Psal. 78. 34, 37. Unevenness of Pulse argues a distemper'd Body, so doth unevenness in Duties a distemper'd Soul. *In their trouble they will pour out a prayer.* When troubles are on them, they will make bold to trouble God, and call him up for their help. God expects frequency of Application to him every day, and greater frequency of those that have more time, and fewer Obstacles and Impediments than others. Now the putting God off with Applications to him, and Acknowledgments of him once a week, instead of every day, and much under Affliction, instead of doing it in all conditions, and at all seasons; or putting him off with Morning-Prayer only, instead of Morning and Evening-Prayer, or with Family-Prayer only, when we should also pray in our Closets daily; these are sins of Omission, in regard of the measure of the Duty.

Secondly, These sins of omission are either partial or total.

Total omissions are, when men wholly neglect the Duties commanded, as when they

they altogether cast off Praying, and Hearing, and giving Alms, and examining their own hearts; *Psal.* 14. 3, 4. *They are all gone aside, there is none that doth good: They call not upon God.* A man may read the Word *Atheist* in the fore-heads of these men. They carry about them where-ever they go the sign and mark of Condemnation. They please themselves possibly that they do not abound in scandalous sins of Commission, not considering that they may be guilty of self-murther, as well by starving or not feeding their Souls, as by stabbing or poisoning their Souls.

2. Partial Omissions are, when men do sometimes perform the Duties commanded, but not with that constancy which they ought, *Job* 15.4. *Thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God*; i. e. Thou imprisonest Prayer, and dost not afford it the liberty it formerly had: It was wont to appear every day openly, but now it is kept in, and shews it self but seldom.

Thirdly, Sins of omission are distinguished into external or internal omissions.

1. External Omissions are a neglect of the outside (as I may call it) of the Command.

2. Internal Omissions are the neglect of the inside of the Command: We must know, that in every Command there is an *Extra* and an *Intra*, an Out-side and an Inside, somewhat that concerns the Hands & Conversation, somewhat that concerns the Heart and Affections. As for example, In the Fourth Command of sanctifying the Sabbath, there God commands us to spend the whole time of his day (except so much as the works of Necessity and Mercy call for) in religious Exercises, and the Duties of his own worship, as Praying, Reading, Hearing, Singing, *&c.* Now the bare performance of these Duties is the out-side of the Command, and he who doth them (though customarily) obeys the Command literally, but the sanctifying the Name of God in these Duties, and the performance of them with Reverence, Humility, Faith, Love, Joy, according to the several duties, and several parts of them, is the inside of the Command; and he alone that performeth these

Duties

Duties in such a manner, obeyeth the Law spiritually. The neglect of the former is an external Omission, for which God threatens Families and Nations: *Pour out thy wrath upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not upon thy Name*, Jer. 10. 25. They who will not deprecate the wrath of God, must feel it; and they who will not intreat his Favour, must go without it. So the not casting the incestuous Person out of the Church, was an external omission, 1 *Cor.* 5. 2. The neglect of the latter, *i. e.* of performing Sabbath-Duties in the forementioned manner, is an internal omission. Thus God complains of his people, that though they pray'd, and possibly made long Prayers, yet God counts their prayers as no prayers, for their internal Omissions: *There is none that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.* They put up (it may be) some lazy Petitions, but they pour out no hearty Desires: Nay, God curseth men for doing his work negligently, Jer. 48. 10. *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully.*

CHAP. XXI.

The agreement and difference between sins of Omission and sins of Commission.

2. IT will further explain these sins of Omission, to consider the difference between Omissions and Commissions, as also their agreement.

1. They agree in the Authority forbidding them. The same God forbids each sin; He that saith, *Thou shalt not kill:* The same saith, *Thou shalt serve me diligently*, Exod. 20. Jer. 48. 10. Matth. 22. 37. *With all thy heart*, Matth. 7. 13.

2. They are both against the same particular Command. In the same Command wherein he forbids *theft*, he commands *diligence* in our Callings, and the use of all lawful means for the increase of our own Estates. In the same Law wherein he forbids *Uncleanness*, He commands *Care and endeavour to preserve our own and our Neighbours Chastity.*

3. They are both a privation of that Rectitude which is required by the Law to the goodness of every action. For if

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malitia moralis, non est quid positivum, If there be nothing positive in the formal nature of sin, according to the Schoolmen, (as there can be nothing positive in it, unless we will make God the Author of it,) but a want of a conformity to the Law; then every Commission is an Omission in this respect, and so they agree in their formal nature.

4. They agree in their fruit and effect; sins of Commission exclude Heaven, and condem to Hell. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor Drunkards, nor Covetous, shall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Ephes. 5. 9. and so do sins of Omission, as the Text doth abundantly prove.

The difference between sins of Omission and sins of Commission consisteth,

1. In that sins of Commission are against a Negative Law, and sins of Omission are against an Affirmative Law. Oppression is against a Negative Law, *Thou shalt not oppress thy Neighbour, Thou shalt not oppress a Stranger*. Neglect of Charity is against an Affirmative Law;

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right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant, Psal. 78. 34, 37. Unevenness of Pulse argues a distemper'd Body, so doth unevenness in Duties a distemper'd Soul. *In their trouble they will pour out a prayer.* When troubles are on them, they will make bold to trouble God, and call him up for their help. God expects frequency of Application to him every day, and greater frequency of those that have more time, and fewer Obstacles and Impediments than others. Now the putting God off with Applications to him, and Acknowledgments of him once a week, instead of every day, and much under Affliction, instead of doing it in all conditions, and at all seasons; or putting him off with Morning-Prayer only, instead of Morning and Evening-Prayer, or with Family-Prayer only, when we should also pray in our Closets daily; these are sins of Omission, in regard of the measure of the Duty.

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4. They agree in their fruit and effect; ſins of Commiſſion exclude Heaven, and condem to Hell. *Know ye not that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor Drunkards, nor Covetous, ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God,* 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Epheſ. 5. 9. and ſo do ſins of Omiſſion, as the Text doth abundantly prove.

The difference between ſins of Omiſſion and ſins of Commiſſion conſiſteth,

1. In that ſins of Commiſſion are againſt a Negative Law, and ſins of Omiſſion are againſt an Affirmative Law. Oppreſſion is againſt a Negative Law, *Thou ſhalt not oppreſs thy Neighbour, Thou ſhalt not oppreſs a Stranger.* Neglect of Charity is againſt an Affirmative Law; *Give*

Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow, turn not thou away, Matth. 5. 42.

2. They differ in this; Every Commission proceeds originally from a sin of Omission, but sins of Omission do not proceed originally from sins of Commission. All sin springeth from this, The departure of the heart from God, *Jer.* 2. 5, *Heb.* 3. 12. and the want of true love to, and fear of his Majesty, 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. *Joh.* 15. which are sins of Omission. Where there is no love to God, there is no care to forbear what he forbids, *Joh.* 14. 24. *He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings.* And where there is no fear of God, all manner of wickedness will abound, *Psal.* 36. 1. 2. *David* concludes a wicked mans Omission from his sins of Commission. The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, *That there is no fear of God before his eyes*; i. e. His scandalous Practices, and sins of Commission, tell me, That he is guilty of inward Omissions, *That there is no fear of God before his eyes.* He who casteth off fear, will soon let the Reins loose to all Licentiousness. *They who called*

called not on God will devour Jacob, *and make waſte his dwelling-place*, Jer. 10. ult. No ſin comes amiſs to them, *Rom.* 3. 9, *to* 14. The monſtrous, horrid, unnatural ſins of the Heathen had their beginning in ſins of Omiſſion. *When they knew God*, (i. e. by the light of nature, which plainly ſpeaks a Deity) *they glorified him not as God*; (*e. i.* did not love him, fear him, truſt in him, honour him as God,) *neither were thankful*, (did not acknowledge their Ingagements to him, for their noble Beings, and manifold Mercies): Theſe were ſins of Omiſſion; but what followeth upon them? Truly unnatural beſtiality, unrighteouſneſs, fornication, wickedneſs, covetouſneſs, maliciouſneſs, envy, murther, pride, *&c. Rom.* 21. 21, *to the end.* Men leave the fountain of living Waters, and then hew themſelves broken Ciſterns which will hold no water, *Jer.* 2. 13.

The firſt and great ſin of Mankind proceeded from an omiſſion. *Adam*'s heart was turned from God by Unbelief, (I humbly conceive) before ever his Hand touched, or Tongue taſted the forbidden fruit. But now ſins of Omiſ-

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sion do not proceed originally from sins of Commission; *James* 1.14,15. *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

Barlow exercit.

3. They differ in this, that sins of Commission are founded in some act or habit: Sins of Omission only in the Soul, without acts or habits. 1. There is somewhat positive about sins of Commission, but nothing about sins of Omission, and that is the reason. 2. As Drunkenness is an immoderate use of Beer or Wine: Here is an act of the Creature, and much positive about this sin, though nothing positive in the sin it self. So in theft another sin of Commission, there is somewhat positive about the taking away our Neighbours goods, and keeping them as our own; but in sins of Omission there is nothing positive; as in not praying, not hearing, not believing, not giving to the Poor; there is nothing positive, no acts, but a neglect of acts required. Sins of Omission are wholly privative, and have nothing of positivity in them. 4. They

4. They differ in this, that sins of Commission are more scandalous in the eyes of men than sins of Omission. I do not say sins of Omission are always less hainous than sins of Commission, (I shall prove by and by they may be more hainous) but that they are less scandalous. Sins of Commission, as Drunkenness, Uncleanness, Theft, Swearing, Murther; these make a great noise in the World, are taken notice of by all, and with the Snail, leave a slime and filth behind them wheresoever they are; But sins of Omission, as not praying in our Closets, not examining our own Hearts, not relieving the Poor and Needy, not bringing up our Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, *&c.* These are more still and quiet, observed by few or none.

5. They differ in this, that sins of Omission are the aversion of the heart from God, and sins of Commission are the conversion of the heart to the Creature, or somewhat below God. Omission turns the heart from God: Hence we read of mans going far from God, *Jer.* 2. 5. and of their departing away from

from the living God, *Heb.* 3. 12. Which is not meant in regard of local motion, (for ſo none can depart from God, *Pſal.* 139. 2, 3, 4, 5.) but in regard of their inward carnal Affections, and diſobedient Converſations, *Jer.* 17. 5. *Whoſe heart departeth from the Lord.* Commiſſions are a turning to the Creature, *Whoſe heart is after covetouſneſs. They imagine miſchief in their hearts*, Pſal. 140. 2. Eccleſ. 9. 3. *The heart of the Sons of men is full of evil.*

Having ſpoken to the nature of ſins of Omiſsion in general, and more particularly by their ſeveral diſtinctions, and their agreement with, and difference from ſins of Commiſsion; I come to the ſecond thing promiſed in the explication of the Doctrine, and that is the danger of them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

The danger of ſins of Omiſsion, in the hainous nature of them, and their offenſiveneſs to God.

Secondly, THe danger of ſins of Omiſsion; though men are ready to conceive that ſins of Omiſſion, becauſe they make no great cry in the World, are but infirmities, are venial ſins, and are not much to be regarded, as having little of danger to the Soul in them; yet the contrary will appear plainly, if we conſider theſe particulars.

1. The malignity and ſinfulneſs of them ſpeaks their danger. The more venome and poyſon there is in any Cup or Diſh, the more dangerous it muſt needs be; the more ſinfulneſs there is in any ſin, the more hazardous it is to the Soul. Now I ſhall ſhew the ſinfulneſs of omiſſions.

1. They are moſt againſt the mind and will of God. Thoſe ſins are the greateſt, which moſt croſs the Will of the Law-giver;

giver; *For sin is a transgression of the Law*, or Mind, *of God.* And every one knoweth that the Mind of God is more in the Precept, or Affirmative part of the Law, than in the Prohibition, or Negative part of it. The Precept or performance of the Duty commanded is the main thing, the Prohibition is, as it were, accidental, in order to our Obedience to the Precept; therefore sins of Omission being against the substance and principal part of the Command, and so most directly against that which is the special Mind of the Law-giver, must needs be the greatest Sins. It is more good to do good, than not to do evil. Omissions are not to be esteemed bare Negations or Privations, but as breaches of a positive Law, wherein the mind of God is most discover'd. Now how great a Sin, and how dangerous is it to cross the Mind of God? surely it's bad thwarting him that can cast Body and Soul into Hell; *I say unto you*, saith Christ, *fear him*, Matth. 10. 28.

Mens legis est lex.

Vide ante, The second difference between sins of omission & commission.

2. Sins of Omission are the ground of, and make way for Sins of Commission. The want of love to God, and our not

not believing his Word, which are Sins of Omiſsion, are the ground of all abominations. When a man once caſteth off daily reading the Word, and ſeeking God by Prayer, or performs thoſe Duties coldly and careleſly; he throws himſelf out of God's Protection, and ſo becomes a Lacquey to the Devil, and a tame Slave to every Luſt to trample on, and tyranize over at pleaſure; *Pſal.* 14. 3, 4. *They are all gone aſide, they are altogether filthy: there is none that doth good, no not one. Negligentiam in orando ſemper aliqua notabilis tranſgreſsio ſequitur*, ſaith One; always ſome notable Sin followeth upon ſlothfulneſs in prayer.

David's not watching his Eyes and Heart, and his not imploying his time better at that hour of the day, brought forth Drunkenneſs, Murder, Adultery, Lying, *&c.* Some Sins of Omiſsion are like great men, that never go without many Followers; admit their Perſons, you muſt admit their long train which they bring with them. So a *Gad*, a whole troop of ugly luſts will throng in upon our [illegible] of one Duty.

Not doing good, fits the heart for doing evil: The ground not ſown with good Corn, doth naturally of its own accord bring forth evil weeds. Indeed, it's impoſsible for him that doth no good, not to do evil. He that doth not gather with Chriſt, ſcattereth; and *he that is not with me, is againſt me*, Matth. 12. 30. He that fights not for his Prince in a day of Battel, is his Enemy; and that Servant who helps not his Maſter in Harveſt, hinders him. Not to ſave a life when we may, is to deſtroy and murther it. The Negative Chriſtian will quickly fall to be a poſitive Atheiſt and Heathen. If the Heart be empty of good, and ſwept clean of Grace, the unclean Spirit will quickly take up his logding in it. Beſides, God doth often judicially give up them to commit Evil, who refuſe to do good. *Becauſe they received not the truth in the love of it*, (here is a Sin of Omiſsion) *God gave them up to ſtrong deluſions, that they might believe a lye*, &c. 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 10, 11. Now how great and dangerous is this Sin, that uſhers in ſo many Sins? Alas, one Sin is too weighty for thy Soul to bear; how heavy

heavy then will that whole rabble and regiment of ſins be, that one ſin of Omiſſion may bring along with it? If I live in Sins of Omiſsion, Sins of Commiſsion will follow both naturally and judicially.

3. Sins of Commiſsion do exceedingly grieve the Spirit of God: Indeed every Sin is offenſive to the Holy Ghoſt, or Spirit of Holineſs, as directly contrary to its nature; but the Spirit of God ſets a particular, ſpecial brand and mark upon theſe Sins, as grievous to him; *Follow that which is good, rejoyce evermore, pray without ceaſing. In every thing give thanks, quench not the Spirit, deſpiſe not Propheſying*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. Obſerve, the Duties are all poſitive; (the neglect whereof is a Sin of Omiſſion) to which he exhorts them, if they would not quench the Spirit. The Spirit is not only grieved, but alſo quenched by Sins of Omiſsion. Fire may be quenched by with-drawing fewel from it, as well as by throwing water on it. By ſcandalous Sins of Commiſsion, we throw water on this heavenly Flame to quench it; but by neglecting to pray and to attend on Propheſying,

and ſuch Sins of Omiſſion, we withdraw fewel from it, and thereby put it out. When the *Iſraelites* would not hear the Voice of God, they are ſaid *to grieve his holy Spirit*, Pſal. 95. And when they believed not his Word, the Wonders that he wrought, they are ſaid *to vex his holy Spirit*, Iſa. 63. 10. with *Numb.* 14. 11. *Numb.* 20. 12. *Then they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit.* Not to obey God, is to diſobey him. Not to be loyal to him, is to be rebellious; now hereby they vexed his holy Spirit. Now how great a Sin, and how dangerous is it to grieve the Spirit of God; the ſize or meaſure of Sin, is to be taken from the Majeſty ſlighted, diſobeyed, and offended by it. The Spirit is God, an infinite boundleſs Being, whom theſe Sins of Omiſſion grieve and vex. Again, how dangerous is it to grieve and drive the Spirit from us: It's the Spirit that must enable us to our Duties, *Rom.* 8. 26. Direct us in our walkings, *Pſal.* 143. 10. Comfort us in our Sorrows, *Joh.* 14. [illegible] *Iſa.* 65. 1, 2, 3. It is the Spirit, that is, the Spirit of Grace and Holineſs, *Zach.* 12. 10. [illegible] 1. 4. and

and muſt work them in our hearts, if ever we be gracious and holy, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. It is the Spirit muſt ſtrengthen us with might in our inward man, to keep the Commandments of God, *Epheſ.* 3. 16. *Ezez.* 36. 27. It is the Spirit that is the earneſt of our Inheritance, the Firſt-fruits of our eternal bleſſed Harveſt, and that muſt ſeal us up unto the day of Redemption, *Epheſ.* 1. 13, 14. *Rom.* 8. *Epheſ.* 4. 30. How great a Sin, and how dangerous therefore is it to grieve this Spirit, and by Sins of Omiſsion to incenſe him to with-draw from us, without whom we are unable unto any good, and indeed expoſed to all evil.

2. The danger of theſe Sins will appear, by their offenſiveneſs to God. Since our Felicity depends on the Favour of God, and our Miſery on his Anger, (Hell it ſelf being but his wrath ever to come, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. *ult.*) thoſe Sins which are highly provoking to God, muſt be very dangerous. If in his Favour be Life, *Pſal.* 30. 5. and his Wrath be worſe than Death, *Pſal.* 90. 11. I had need to beware how I provoke him to jealouſie. Now the not

believing God, which is a ſin of Omiſſion, is called *the Provocation*, Pſal. 95. 8, 9. *Harden not your hearts, as in the Provocation, as in the day of temptation in the Wilderneſs: When your Fathers tempted me, proved me, and ſaw my Works.* This Provocation was their not believing his Word, for all the Wonders he had wrought for them. They ſaid, *Can God furniſh a Table in the Wilderneſs? Behold he ſmote the Rock, that waters guſhed out: Can he give Bread alſo? Can he provide Fleſh for his people? Therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth: So a fire was kindled againſt* Jacob, *and anger alſo came up againſt* Iſrael: *becauſe they believed not in God, and truſted not in his Salvation*, Pſal. 78. 19. *to* 23.

It will appear how provoking ſins of Omiſſion are to God by theſe three particulars:

1. By his frequent Reprehenſions, and complaints of men for them. He blames men for not ſacrificing, *Mal.* 3. 18. for not mourning, 1 *Cor.* 5. And ſharply reproves for not receiving Correction, *Jer.* 2. 30. *In vain have I ſmitten your Children, they received no Correction*; For not

not grieving when ſmitten, *Jer.* 5. 3. For not ſeeking God, *Iſa.* 9. 13. Nay, obſerve what ſpecial notice he takes of, and how ſadly he aggravates their Omiſſions, *Jer.* 3. 7. *I ſaid after ſhe had done all theſe things*, (i. e. gone up upon every high Mountain, and upon every green Tree,) *Turn thou unto me, but ſhe turned not.* Here he complains of *Iſraels* Omiſſion, in not turning to him; but mark how he accents *Judahs* Omiſſion, who knew what *Iſrael* had done, and how God had put her away, *verſ.* 8. *Yet her treacherous Siſter* Judah *feared not*, (the dreadful doom of *Iſrael* ſtruck no aw into the heart of *Judah.*) And *verſ.* 10. *And yet for all this* (that *Iſrael* hath committed, and been ſeverely puniſhed for,) *her treacherous Siſter* Judah *hath not turned unto me with the whole heart, but feignedly, ſaith the Lord.* Here was an Omiſſion internal, or in the manner of her Converſation; it was not ſincere, but with diſſimulation.

2. By his ſevere Comminations and Threatnings denounced againſt thoſe that are guilty of Omiſſions. He curſeth thoſe that deny him their help in a day

of Battel, and that come not forth to help the Lord against the mighty, *Judg.* 5. 23. He curseth those that are not diligent about his Work, *Jer.* 48. 10. And believe it, his Curse is effectual, not like the discharge of a piece with powder only, which doth no execution. Those whom he curseth, are cursed indeed: His curse, like Lightning, blasteth and withereth where-ever it cometh. *I cursed his habitation,* (saith *Eliphaz,* not as a private Malediction of his own Spirit, but as a pious Prædiction of Gods Spirit.) Now mark what followeth upon God's cursing the wicked mans Habitation, *Job* 5. 2, 3, 4. His house is by this breath of God tumbling to the ground presently. *His Children* (that should be the honour and support of it) *are far from safety,* vers. 3. *they are crushed in the Gate, and there is none to deliver them,* vers. 4. *Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh out of the thorns, and the Robber swalloweth up his substance.* His Estate, which is a second thing requisite to the outward glory of a Family, that is seised on, and snatched from him. So God threatneth multi-

tudes

tudes with his wrath (which is ſo terrible, ſo intollerable, that none can ſtand before it, *Pſal.* 147. 8. that Mountains are moved, Rocks are rent in pieces, the Foundations of the Earth tremble at it; yea, that God's own people are ready to be diſtracted at it, *Pſal.* 88. 3, 4, 5.) for a Sin of Omiſſion, *For not calling on his Name*, Jer. 10. ult.

God threatneth to cut a man off from his people (which includes either a cutting off from the ſociety of Gods people here and hereafter, as *Gen.* 17. 14. or of being cut off out of the Land of the living by the Sword of the Magiſtrate, *Exod.* 30. 33. or both, as ſome think,) for a meer omiſſion. *But a man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the Paſſover; even the ſame Soul ſhall be cut off from his people*, Numb. 9. 13.

3. It appears, that Sins of Omiſſion are highly provoking to God, by the execution of his Judgments on them that are guilty of them. His Works as well as his Word ſpeak his great indignation againſt theſe ſins. *Saul* loſt his Kindgom, for not killing *Agag* and the beſt

beſt of the Flock, *Becauſe thou haſt rejected the Word of the Lord, the Lord hath alſo rejected thee from being King*, ſaith *Samuel* to him, 1 *Sam.* 15. 23, 26, 28. *Ahab* omitted to kill *Benhadad*, and loſt his life for it, 1 *King.* 20. 42. *Becauſe thou haſt let go a man out of thy hand, whom I appointed to utter deſtruction, thy life ſhall go for his life.* *Eli* was a good man, and as much in Gods Favour, but by not reproving his Sons, he ſo far incurred Gods anger, that he loſt his two wicked Fondlings in a day, and the Prieſt-hood for ever, 1 *Sam.* 3. 12, 13, *&c.* *Moſes* was God's ſpecial Friend and Favorite: *And the Lord ſpake to* Moſes *face to face, as a man ſpeaketh to his Friend*, Exod. 33. 11. *And the Lord ſaid to* Moſes, *thou haſt found grace in my ſight, and I know thee by Name.*

Yet when this *Moſes* is guilty of an Omiſſion, that he doth not believe God, nor ſanctifie his Name in the eyes of the Children of *Iſrael*, he is excluded the temporal *Canaan*, *Numb.* 20. 12. Though *Moſes* was taken up to the Mount, to converſe with God forty days together, when *Aaron* and all the people muſt ſtay below;

below; though *Moſes* was honour'd to ſee the Commands written with God's own Hand; though *Moſes* was taken into a Rock, while God paſſed before him, that he might hear his Name, *The Lord, the Lord God gracious*, &c. proclaimed, and ſee his back parts; though God was pleaſed to confer with *Moſes*, as one Friend with another; yet when this *Moſes* comes to be guilty of ſuch an Omiſsion, he is denied liberty to enter into the Land flowing with Milk and Honey. Nay, though this *Moſes* begs ſo hard, *I pray thee let me go over, and ſee the good Land beyond* Jordan, *that goodly Mountain and* Lebanon; Yet God was ſo provoked by his Omiſsion, that though he had heard him once and again for greater things on the behalf of others, *Exod.* 33. 11. *to* 15. *Numb.* 14. 10. He would not hear him in this ſmall Requeſt for himſelf; *But his wrath was kindled, and he would not hear me, and ſaid, let it ſuffice thee, ſpeak no more unto me of this matter*, Deut. 3. 25, 26.

Nay, how angry was Chriſt with the man who had not a Wedding-Garment at

at his Supper; how severe is his Sentence? how dreadful his Doom? *And when the King came in to see the Guests, he saw there a man which had not a Wedding-Garment.* Though but one in a Crowd, Christ spied him.

1. Here is his Transgression: We do not read, that the man slighted the Invitation, and denied to come, as they in *vers.* 5. nor that he intreated his Servants spitefully, and slew them, as those, *vers.* 6. We do not read, that the man came to the Feast in a drunken-fit, or reproached and abused either the Master or Guests, but only omitted to bring with him a Wedding-Garment, which some say is Charity; others Obedience; he was a Professor, but without godly practices; but I suppose is meant Christ, and the Graces of the Spirit, which are compared to a Garment, *Rom.* 13. *Col.* 3. *Ephes.* 4. 23, 24. *And that ye be renewed in the Spirit of your Minds. And that ye put on the new man.*

2. Here is the mans self-conviction, *vers.* 12. ἐφιμώθη, he was muzled: The same word is used of muzling the mouth of

of a Beaſt, whereby its unable to open it to eat, 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. His conſcience was that which put a muzle on his mouth, being convinced that he might and ought to have procured a Garment, before he had gone to the Feaſt. They who have a form, and no power of Godlineſs, who make a ſhew without any ſubſtance of Religion, will be ſpeechleſs when Chriſt ſhall come to reckon with them.

3. Here is his Condemnation, *verſ.* 13. *Bind him hand and foot.* When Malefactors are caſt in Law, either by their own Confeſſion, or the Evidence of others; the Gaoler puts new Fetters and Shackles on them to ſecure their Perſons againſt Sentence and Execution, leſt they ſhould make an eſcape. *Bind him hand and foot*: Make ſure of him. The Sinner ſhall have no power of reſiſting, or poſſibility of flying from Divine ſeverity. And ἐκβάλετε, *ejicite*, *caſt him forth.* Caſt him out as a vile, loathſome, abominable wretch, unfit for company, whom I hate to behold; *Into utter darkneſs*; εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον, a Priſon, a Dungeon, where there is no light, a con-

a condition moſt remote from joy and comfort; ſuch darkneſs as hath a blackneſs joyn'd to it, *Jude, verſ.* 13. *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, weeping for the extremity of their own pain, and gnaſhing of teeth out of envy at others happineſs.

CHAP. XXIII.

The danger of ſins of Omiſſion, in their deſtructiveneſs to man, and our proneneſs to over-look them.

3. THe danger of Sins of Omiſſion will appear by their deſtructiveneſs to men. The more wrong and injury any Sin doth us, the more danger is in it. Now what hath been already ſpoken, doth abundantly evince this. If Omiſſions are ſo great ſins, that they moſt directly croſs the mind of the Law, and make way for all Sins of Commiſſion, and exceedingly grieve the Spirit of God, they muſt needs be dangerous and deſtructive to men. If God himſelf blame them ſo ſharply, threaten them

them ſo ſeverely, and puniſh them ſo grievouſly, who are guilty of ſuch ſins; then theſe Sins muſt be very injurious to us. But it will further appear, if you conſider that they cauſe,

1. The Judgments of God on men, in regard of their Bodies, or external Comforts. He puniſheth many with extream penury, for not being diligent in their particular Callings. *Their idleneſs* (which is a ſin of Omiſsion) *cloaths them with rags*, Prov. 23. 21. Again, *The idle Soul ſhall ſuffer hunger*, Prov. 19. 15. How doth experience prove the truth of this. Many begin the World (as we ſay) with conſiderable Eſtates, who, in a few years, for lack of care and induſtry in their Imploys, have waſted all. The idle man may call the Prodigal Brother. Beſides, theſe Sins of Omiſsion are puniſhed with a temporal deſtruction. The Lord having ſaved the people out of the Land of *Egypt*, afterwards deſtroyed them that believed not, *Jude*, *verſ.* 5. *Iſrael* was God's own people, his peculiar treaſure, *Exod.* 19. 5. a people nigh unto him, *Pſal.* 148. *ult.* incomparable for this, *Deut.* 4. 7.

and

and other Priviledges, *Rom.* 9. 4. Yet when guilty of this Omission, God would not spare them, but destroy'd them. No Priviledges can exempt from punishment. God may forsake his Tabernacle at *Shiloth*; deliver his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemies hand, if they will not believe him, if they will not obey him, *Psal.* 78. 60, 61.

2. A judicial tradition to spiritual Judgments. Of all Judgments, none in this World are so dreadful as those that are spiritual; bodily Judgments touch the Flesh, but these the Spirit. When God would speak and wreak his anger against a person or people to the utmost; he doth it this way, by giving them up to their own wickedness. When he would strike *Ephraim* under the fifth Rib, and kill him at a blow, it is by this Judgment. *Ephraim is joyned to Idols, let him alone*, Hos. 4. 17. He is given to Idolatry, let him take his fill of it, and see what the end will be. He is fond of lyes and vanities, and delights in prostituting himself to their embraces; *Let him alone.* Let none disturb him, or recall him; let no Mercy, no Misery, no Means,

Means, no Ministry ever hinder him in the prosecution of his Lusts, or stop him in his course, much less be effectual for his Repentance and Amendment. In temporal Judgments, God acts the part of a Father, to whip his Child, that he may reclaim him for his Errors, and be fit to inherit his Estate. But in spiritual, God acts the part of a Judge, to deliver the Malefactor over to Execution. In the former, he prunes the Tree, that it may bring forth fruit, and so continue in his Garden to his joy and delight; but in the latter, he leaves the Tree as unsound and barren, to be cut down for the fire. Now sins of Omission cause God to deliver men up to these Judgments. God calls upon *Israel* to hear and obey him, they will not. *But my People would not hearken to my Voice*, Israel *would none of me.* What was the result of their refusal? *So I gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels*, Psal. 81. 11, 12. God doth not testifie his anger for their contempt of him, by sending Plague, or Flames, or wild Beasts among them. He doth not say, Well, since they thus

ſlight my Authority, I will be avenged on them to purpoſe, I will give them up to the Sword, or Famine, or racking Diſeaſes, or greedy devouring Lions, which would have been ſad and grievous; but he executes on them a far more ſad and grievous Judgment, when he ſaith, *So I gave them up to their own hearts luſts, and they walked in their own counſels.* God's leaving one Soul to one luſt, is far worſe than leaving him to all the Lions in the World. Alas, it will tear the Soul worſe than a Lion can do the Body, and rent it in pieces, when there is none to deliver it. God's giving them up to their own wills, that they walked in their own counſels, is in effect a giving them up to eternal wrath and woe.

3. The deſtructiveneſs of Sins of Omiſſion to the Souls of men appears, in that they render the Condition of men deſperate, and without remedy. Sins of Commiſſion wound the Soul dangerouſly, but ſins of Omiſſion make the ſtate of the Patient hopeleſs and deſperate. Sins of Commiſſion are directly againſt the Law, and ſo bind the Sinner over

over to its Curſe; but Sins of Omiſſion are directly againſt the Goſpel, and thereby hinder the Patients Cure, *Gal.* 3. 20. *Joh.* 3. *ult.* He that hath broken the Precepts of the Law, is liable to its puniſhment; but yet this Sinner may flie to the Goſpel, as his City of Refuge, and lay hold on Chriſt there tendered for Pardon and Life. But by ſome ſins of Omiſſion, he rendereth the Goſpel ineffectual for his good, and himſelf uncapable of the good things promiſed in it. Faith and Repentance are the two Conditions upon which all the exceeding rich and precious Promiſes depend; ſo that by not believing, and not repenting, which are Sins of Omiſſion, men deny themſelves all the benefit and advantage of the Goſpel. *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved, he that believeth not ſhall be damned*, Mark 16. 16. *He upbraided the Cities wherein moſt of his mighty works were done, becauſe they repented not. Woe to thee* Corazin, *woe to thee* Bethſaida, *&c.* Matth. 11. 21, 22, 23. Sins of Commiſſion make the wound, and Sins of Omiſſion keep off that Plaiſter, which alone can heal it. Sins of Com-

mission plunge us into a bottomless gulph of Misery, and Sins of Omission stop the current of that Mercy that alone can relieve and succour us. These Sinners are like men in swoons, gasping for breath, and ready to expire; yet shut their mouths, and fasten their teeth together, to keep out those Cordials that alone can recall them to life.

4. The danger of Sins of Omission will appear, by our proneness to slight and neglect them. If Sins of Omission are of so deadly a nature, as most to contradict the Will of God, and so highly provoking to him, and so mortally destructive to us; then the more we slight this great Enemy, the more dangerous it is to us: A weak enemy, and an enemy that can do us little harm, may be slighted without great danger. But when an enemy is so powerful, so deadly, so damnable, our contempt of him is a great advantage to him, and a great disadvantage to us; for by this means he falls upon us disarmed and unprepared for him. *Pompey* slighted *Cæsar*, when News first came to *Rome* of his marching into *Italy* with his Army, and said,

That

That if did but stamp with his foot, he should therewith fetch Souldiers enough out of all parts to subdue Cæsar. And so made small preparation to resist him, which was his own and the Commonwealths destruction. Truly, thus men are apt to slight sins of Omission, and thereby to undo themselves. As it's said of *Joab*, He spake kindly to *Amasa*, and made as if he would kiss him: *But* Amasa *took no heed to the Sword that was in* Joabs *hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels to the ground, that he died*, 2 Sam. 20. 9, 10. Thus sin of Omission is familiar with us, and pretends rather love and kindness, than any hurt to us (for in all sin there is a deceitfulness) and we taking no heed to the Sword in its hand, to its malignant killing-nature, but slighting it, as if it were venial, are destroy'd by it. Heb. 3. 13.

And there are three Reasons why we are so apt to over-look sins of Omission:

1. Because Conscience doth not so soon cheek us for them, as for sins of Commission. If a man commit Murther, or Adultery, or Theft, his Con-

science is ready to flie in his face, and thunder in his ears, as it did with *Cain*, after the slaughter of his Brother, that he cried out, *My punishment is greater than I can bear*; and he went up and down trembling (as some think) all his days, *Gen.* 4. 13, 14. But men may neglect Praying, or Reading, or Charity, especially in regard of the manner of doing them, and Conscience will take little notice of it. Such Omissions may pass with little or no regard. *Cain* in the Offering he brought to God, neglected (probably) to bring the best of the fruit of the ground, however to offer it with an upright believing heart; but we read not that he took notice of these Omissions, though he did of God's manifest disrespecting his Offering, *Gen.* 4. 3, 4, 5. It's ordinary with some moral men, if they fall into ill Company sometime by accident, and are made drunk, to be ashamed of it, and much troubled for it; but these men can live in their Families without Prayer and Scripture, and neglect to teach their Children and Servants the ways of God; and yet these Omissions do not at all

disturb

disturb them, they go up and down, and eat, and drink, and sleep, as merrily as if they obeyed the whole Will of God. *Job* tells you of those that bid *God depart from them*, that desire not, nor endeavour to know him; that cast off Prayer to him, and all his Service as fruitless; and yet these men, guilty of such great and gross Omissions, could take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organ, and spend their days in wealth and mirth, *Job* 21. 12, 13, 14, 15. These Negative Sins are still and silent, and make none or little noise in the ears of Conscience. But positive sins are more clamorous. We read of those that were guilty of Bribery and Oppression under their guise and mask of Religion; and how they are stab'd and frighted? *A dreadful sound is in their Ears, trouble and anguish make them afraid. They believe not that they shall come out of darkness*, Job 15. 21, 22, 24, compared with 34. & 35. *verses*. How many do we know in places where we live, who if they should rob or wrong their Neighbours, would hardly enjoy any peace or quietness in

their Spirits, who can live chearfully and contentedly day after day, nay year after year, while all this while they rob God of that Love, and Fear, and Trust which they ow him in their hearts, and of that open Homage and Allegiance which they ow him in their Houses.

The reason hereof is, because sins of Commission are most against natural light. In sins of Omission there is no such actual disturbance, by which the free contemplation of the mind is hindered, as in sins of Commission. Beside foul acts of Sin, as Uncleanness and Murther, *&c.* bring more shame, and cause more horrour, than bare neglects of our Duty. Conscience is not wont to take any great notice of external neglects, or of spiritual defects.

2. We are the more prone to overlook, and take no notice of sins of Omission; (as Conscience is less troubled for them, so) our Christian Friends are not so apt to warn and admonish us of them, as of sins of Commission. If a Professor fall into some gross sin of Commission; as if he be over-taken with intemperance, or lying, or going beyond his Neigh-

Neighbour: All the Town or Neighbourhood rings of it, his Christian Friends hear and take notice of it, and out of love to his, and faithfulness to their own Souls, admonish him of it, and endeavour with the Spirit of meekness to bring him to repentance for it. But this Professor may neglect prayer in his Closet, reading and meditating on the Word of God, examining his own heart; nay, possibly prayer in his Family, and the instruction of those committed to his Charge in the Principles of Religion, and his Friends be wholly ignorant hereof, and so be all their days wanting to acquaint him with his sin herein. When *David* had been guilty of several sins of Commission in the matter of *Uriah*, *Nathan* hears of it, (for it seems to be the Town-talk, in that it's said, *That he caused the Enemies of God to blaspheme*, vers. 14. And I suppose Gods Narration of it to him was rather a Command, or Commission, for the manner of his reprehension of *David*, than of certifying him of that he was ignorant before,) he goeth to him, and tells him thereof, and calls him to Repentance for them, 2 *Sam.* 12. 1, *to*

1, *to* 10. But though *David* in all this time (likely nine moneths, for the Child was born, *verſ.* 14.) had been guilty of many Omiſſions, in not confeſſing his ſin with ſorrow and ſhame, in not begging pardon with Faith and Hope, and in ſeveral other particulars; yet *Nathan* takes no notice thereof in his Speech to him, neither makes any mention of them.

3. We are the more prone to overlook ſins of Omiſſion, becauſe they are ſo near akin to Intermiſſions, which are lawful and neceſſary. Affirmative Precepts (as was ſaid before) do not bind *ad ſemper*; I am bound to pray in my Cloſet and Family every day, but I am not bound to pray in either all the day. God commands me to mind the nouriſhing and refreſhing my Body, and to follow my particular Calling, and as occaſion is to viſit the Fatherleſs and Afflicted; now becauſe theſe Intermiſſions, or Omiſsions, for a time are allowed and commanded, men are apt to turn them, or to fall from them, into total Omiſsions, and when they do ſo, to be little troubled for them. Becauſe men

may

may be excused from solemn religious Duties three parts or more of the week-day, therefore they will neglect them altogether, and are insensible of their neglect. Commissions being never lawful, for the Negative Commands bind *ad semper*; therefore if men be guilty of them, they take the more notice of them, and lay them more to heart; but positive Precepts being sometimes unseasonable, and binding but at sometimes, (*i. e.* the Duties of them are to be performed but at some time) when instead of our intermission there be an omission, we are ready to wink at it, and regard it at most but as an Infirmity, which may require a pardon of course. If I may omit Prayer and Scripture ten hours of the day, saith the subtle wicked heart of man, why not eleven hours? and if eleven hours, what great hurt if it be omitted twelve hours? *i. e.* the whole day, and the Duty be not performed at all.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

The Reasons why sins of Omission are damnable.

I Come now to the third thing to be spoken to in the explication of this Doctrine, and that is to give the Reasons why Christ will condemn men at the Great Day to eternal Torments for Sins of Omission.

Thirdly, The Reasons of the Doctrine, *Why sins of Omission are damnable:*

1. Reason. 1. The great and grand Reason is, because they are Sins. Every sin is damnable: *The wages of sin* (as sin) *is death*, Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal, *Rom. 6. ult.* Therefore these Omissions being sins as well as Commissions, must of necessity be damnable to our Souls. As there is bitterness in every Sprig or Branch of Wormwood, and saltness in every drop or spoonful of Sea-water; so there is Death and Hell, and Wrath and Damnation in every Sin. The wicked Papists distinguish Sins into Venial

Venial and Mortal, but they got that distinction from the Devil, not from God; they have their seven deadly sins; But the Holy Ghost tells us, All sins are deadly, without any distinction, *Gal.* 3. 10. Though one Sin may be greater and more hainous than another, yet every sin is mortal. A Pistol is less than a Musket, and a Musket than a Canon; but they are all of them killing; *Ezek.* 18. *The Soul that sins shall die.* Under the word *death* is comprehended all the misery of this and the other World. Sin being a contempt of the Authority, a violation of the Law, and a slighting the Love of an infinite God, deserves all that privation of Good, and infliction of Evil which this Sentence of Christ includes, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* God cannot inflict a greater punishment, nor can a finite limited Creature bear greater Torments than Sin (being of infinite demerit) requires and calls for.

Now I have largely proved, that Omissions are sins as well as Commissions; and to speak properly and exactly, there is no sin but the sin of [illegible]on.

For

For even in Commissions, their sinfulness consisteth in their want of that goodness which the Law requireth. Were there not a deficiency in them of somewhat which they ought to have, or a want of conformity to the Law, there would be no sin in them. Yea, I have proved sins of Omission in some respect greater sins, as more against the Mind of the Law-giver, (whose Will consists rather in the Affirmative than Negative part of the Command) and as the ground of sins of Commission, and as more directly against the Gospel than sins of Commission. They are much mistaken, who judge Omissions pure Privations, or meer Negations little other than non-entities; for Omissions are transgressions of an Affirmative Command, and violations of a positive Precept, and the greatest Contradictions to the Mind of the Law, and therefore most justly liable to its Curse. The Apostle tells us what Obedience the Law requireth, and what the Condition of such as fail therein is, *Gal.* 3. 10. 1. It requireth practical Obedience, not hearing, or knowing, or speaking only

of

of what is written in the Book of the Law, but doing it; *To do them.* It's doing that the Law requireth, *Do this and live*, &c. And it's doers that the Law juſtifieth, *Rom.* 2. 13. *Not the hearers of the Law, but the doers thereof ſhall be juſtified.* Now under this doing, ſins of Omiſſion are expreſly forbidden, and thoſe Duties (the neglect of which are ſins of Omiſſion) are commanded.

2. It requireth perſonal Obedience, *Every one.* It takes no notice of Obedience by a Proxy, or a Surety, but requires it in our own perſons. The Law admits not a Mediator.

3. Perfect Obedience; *In every thing written in the Book of the Law.* It will not admit of the leaſt deviation, of any one ſtep awry, but preſently curſeth and condemneth for them. If any thought, word or deed, be never ſo little too light, it will not grant the leaſt grain of allowance, but dampeth for them.

4. It muſt be perpetual; *That continueth not.* If in one day, one hour, one moment of his life he fail, he is undone. If a man could be obedient to the whole Law all the time of his life, and ſhould

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in his dying-hour disobey it; the Law would take no notice of all his former Obedience, but sent him to Hell for his latter Disobedience. For mark the state of those that yield not this perfect, personal, perpetual, practical Obedience. Their Condition is cursed; *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the Book of the Law to do them.* In the word *cursed*, all evil is included. So that Omissions, or the neglect of those Duties which the Law requireth, being sins, they render the Creature liable to the Curse, which is indeed all manner of misery here and hereafter.

Death and Hell are the end of every Sin, though they are not the end of every Sinner; they are the reward of every evil Work, though not the reward of every evil Worker. Free Grace in the blood of Christ doth sometimes interpose, and put in an Exception to this general Rule. The Gospel accepted and pleaded, is a bar to those rigorous proceedings of the Law. Therefore though this Reason will justifie Christ, and condemn the Sinner in the judg-

ment

ment of his own Conſcience, (eſpecially this Sinner being under a Covenant of Works) yet I ſhall give farther Reaſons from the Sinners non-intereſt in the Priviledges of the Goſpel.

2. Chriſt will condemn men at the laſt day to eternal Torments, for ſins of Omiſſion, becauſe they ſpeak a man in a carnal, natural eſtate. The Goſpel, that is the only Ark for a Chriſtian to ſhelter his Soul in, againſt the Flood of the Laws Curſes, requireth a change of the nature and diſpoſition, as abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation. Chriſt, the great Preacher and Purchaſer of the Goſpel, affirmeth ſolemnly, *Verily, Verily, I ſay unto thee, Except a man be born again, he ſhall never ſee the Kingdom of God*, Joh. 3. 3. This is indiſpenſably requiſite, not only as a condition without which Heaven may not be had in regard of Gods pleaſure, but alſo as a diſpoſition without which Heaven or Happineſs cannot be enjoy'd in regard of the ſubject. For 'tis this that is meant by our being *made meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in light*, Col. 1. 12. Again, the Holy Ghoſt tells *Reaſon 2.*

us, *That without holiness no man shall see God*, Heb. 12. 14. This holiness as a due qualification of the Agent in relation to the beatifical Vision or sight of God, the blessed-making Object, is necessary by the Gospel. How often are the Unregenerate and unsanctified by the Spirit of God doomed to Hell, and excluded Heaven, *Joh.* 3. 18. *Rev.* 19. *Into it can in no wise enter any thing that is defiled or unclean.* Again, *Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?* Ezek. 33. 11. Implying, that Death and Destruction are the portion of the Unconverted.

Now these Sins of Omission are evidences of a mans want of Regeneration. Nay, there is much more evil in a state of Sin, than in an act of Sin; which state of Sin consisteth most in Sins of Omission. For this was the great evil and misery of the *Ephesians* by nature, *Eph.* 2. 12. *That they were without God, i. e.* were without any inward regard of him, or outward Obedience to him. Sound Conversion and saving Repentance make clear work, as the Flood drown'd all out of the Ark, *Noahs* Friends as well as others. So Repentance

tance deſtroys all ſins, even ſins of Omiſſion as well as Commiſſion. It loves none, it allows of none. Reſtraining Grace will probably refuſe the way of Diſobedience, but renewing Grace will cloſe the way of Obedience. Thoſe that are in a wicked and unregenerate ſtate, are characterized in Scripture from their ſins of Omiſſion. *The wicked through the pride of his heart will not ſeek after God: God is not in all his thoughts*, Pſal. 10. 4. *The Lord hath a controverſie with the Land, becauſe there is no Mercy, nor Truth, nor Knowledge of God in the Land*, Hoſ. 4. 1. Nay, the reign of Sin (which ever ſpeaks an unconverted and unregenerate eſtate) is as viſible, if not more in Omiſſions than in Commiſſions. As there is as high an act of Authority, and Soveraignty, and Princely Power in a Negative Voice, or denying ſuch and ſuch things to be done as in a poſitive Law, enjoyning ſuch and ſuch things to be done. So the omiſſion of what is good, or refuſing to do what God commands, may ſpeak Sin reigning in the Soul, as well as doing, or commanding to be done what God hath forbidden.

It is indeed the judgment of many, that a Princes Negative Voice is a greater part and mark of his Royalty, than any Affirmative Command of his; for a King may have Power to Command, that which he hath no Power to forbid. As he may and ſhould enjoyn his Subjects to Worſhip the true God, according to his revealed Will; but he hath no Power to forbid them. Thus in Sins of Omiſſion, for a man to live without Prayer, without the love and fear of God, without delight in him, and communion with him, without care of, and watchfulneſs over his own heart and life, may be a greater ſign of the reign of Sin, and thereby of an unregenerate ſtate, than the commiſſion of ſome groſs actual Tranſgreſſions.

It is apparent, that this man is under the power of Luſt, as a Servant to it, Tit. 3. 3. *And under the dominion of the Devil, carried captive by him at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 26. And an unregenerate, unſanctified perſon, becauſe he lives in Diſobedience to theſe poſitive Laws of God. *Whereas he that is born of God ſinneth not*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. with his whole

will;

will; there is not a free, voluntary, chearful ſubmiſſion of his Will to the quiet, undiſturbed dominion of Sin. And he that is born of God hath a tender regard to the whole Law. *I have eſteemed thy Precepts concerning all things to be right; therefore I hate every falſe way*, Pſal. 119. 128. He hath reſpect to Affirmative as well as Negative Precepts: He hath an equal uniform regard to all the Law, to that part which commands the doing good, as well as that part which forbids the doing evil. Therefore the man that lives in Sins of Omiſſion, is not born of God, and therefore uncapable by the Goſpel of Heaven; and ſo juſtly for this cauſe ſentenced to Hell.

CHAP. XXV.

Farther Reaſons why Chriſt at the Great Day will condemn men for ſins of Omiſſion.

3. CHriſt will condemn men at the Great Day for ſins of Omiſſion, becauſe thoſe that live in ſuch Sins have *Reaſon* 3.

no interest in himself. There is no way to escape Hell, but by the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 *Thess.* 1. *ult. Jesus that delivereth from the wrath to come.* There is no way to attain Heaven, but by Christ: *I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish*, Joh. 10. 28.

As Salvation is God's Gift, *Rom. 6. ult.* so it's Christs Purchase. *There is no Name under Heaven whereby men may be saved, but by the Name of Christ*, Act. 4. 12. So that all who are without Christ, not interested in him, must of necessity perish. *He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son hath not life*, 1 Joh. 5. 12. Those that are without Christ are unpardoned; *All their sins are imputed to them*, Ephes. 4. ult. Rom. 3. 25. And where-ever sin is imputed, it condemneth, *Ezek.* 18. 3. Those that are not interested in Christ, are Children of the Devil, *Joh.* 8. 44. and Children of wrath, *Ephes.* 2. 2, 3. And such Children must be with their Father the Devil, and under wrath for ever.

Now those that live in Sins of Omission have no interest in Christ. Our interest in Christ, and so in Life, is by

Faith.

Faith. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by Faith*, Ephes. 3. 17. *Gal.* 2. 20. *I live by Faith in the Son of God.* It is Faith that causeth the Union between Christ and the Soul, and joyns them together; by virtue of which Union, the Christian hath communion with Christ in his Merits and Righteousness, that his Life, and Death, and Burial are the Christians, are by God imputed to him, as if performed in his own person: Hence it's said, That the Christian lives with Christ, is crucified with Christ, and buried with Christ, *Rom.* 6. 4. And the Christian is said *to be the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. ult. By this Union with Christ, which is the fruit of Faith, the Christian is *made a Son of God*, Gal. 3. 26. *and so an Heir of God, and Joynt-Heir with Christ*, Rom. 8. 17. As a Woman by marriage being united and made one with a Man, hath communion with him in his Relations, Honours, and Estate So the Christian by Faith made one with Christ, hath communion with him in his Relations. *Go tell my Brethren, I go to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God,*

Joh. 20. 17. In his Estate, *Christ is Heir of all things*, Heb. 1. 2. and the *Believer is a Joynt-Heir with him*, as is before proved. Christ was the First-born among many Brethren, and so the Inheritance did belong to him, *Col.* 1. 18. Believers are a Congregation of first-born, and so the right of the Inheritance is theirs, *Heb.* 12. 23. But such as live in sins of Omission are without Faith, and therefore without Christ, and therefore must be without Heaven for ever. Faith is a sanctifying as well as a justifying Grace, *Act.* 26. 18. *And to give them an Inheritance among them that are sanctified through Faith in Christ*, and therefore will not suffer the Soul to live in any sin.

Faith will not suffer a man to live in the want of love to God, in so great an Omission; for when Faith certifieth the Soul of Gods love to it, this kindleth in the Soul flames of love to God, 1 *Joh.* 4. 19. When Faith brings much fewel, the fire of love will be great. Faith will not suffer a man to live without Repentance. The eye of Faith which beholds a Christ crucified for sin, affects

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the heart with sorrow for, and indignation against those sins that crucified him, *Zach.* 12. 10. *They shall see him whom they have pierced, and mourn.* Faith will not suffer a man to live without delight in Christ, and rejoycing in the God of all Consolation. Faith seeth so much good certainly laid up in the Covenant and Promises for the Soul, that it fills the Soul with joy in the hope and expectation of the enjoyment of them. *Whom having not seen, we love: and in whom believing, though now we see him not, we rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 7, 8. Faith will not suffer a man to live without waiting quietly on God. Faith will not limit the Holy One of *Israel*, but patiently stay Gods time for the mercies the Soul wanteth. Faith knoweth his Bonds are good, his Debts are in sure Hands: *The God that cannot lye hath promised*, Tit. 1. 2. and therefore is not hasty to call them in. *He that believeth will not make haste*, Isa. 28. 16. Faith will not suffer a man to live without prayer. He that knows his own wants and necessities, how great and urgent they are, and also where he

may

may quickly have liberal Supplies, and bountiful Relief will not long be kept from that Door. You may sooner and easier put off a Beggar ready to starve, (who must needs perish, if Charity do not help him,) and perswade him never to ask Alms more, as keep a Believer from his daily waiting at Heavens Temple, to ask spiritual Alms. An Unbeliever hath little hope to speed, and therefore little heart to speak. But a Believer hath tasted God to be gracious, and received many a blessing upon his knees, and therefore cannot but know that Door again, at which he hath received so good, so large Doles. He knoweth that whatsoever he asketh, according to the Will of God, in the Name of Christ, shall be granted him, 1 *Joh.* 5. 14. *Joh.* 14. 14. Hereby he is encouraged to beg and ask. *I believed, therefore have I spoken*, saith *David*, *Psal.* 116. 10. I believed, saith the Soul, therefore have I wept, and pray'd, and made supplication, and have prevailed.

Faith will not suffer a man to live without Scripture. The Word of God is the Food of Faith, and a man can as well

well live without Bread, as Faith without the Word, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. It's Scripture that breeds Faith; *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*, Rom. 10. 17. And it's Scripture that feeds Faith, and helps it to thrive; *I hope in thy Word*, Psal. 119. 114. Hope is a degree of Faith. So *Psal.* 119. *Establish thy Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou hast caused me to trust.* Thus I might shew how inconsistent other Sins of Omission are with Faith; and therefore they who live in such sins, must be Unbelievers, and so obnoxious to the wrath of God, *Joh. 3. ult.* But I shall conclude this Head with this Note, that Faith is obediential, and therefore it's impossible for a Believer to live in Disobedience to God's positive Laws. We read in Scripture of the Obedience of Faith.

Faith in the Promises works Obedience to the Precepts. *As 'tis impossible without Faith to please God*, Heb. 11. So 'tis impossible with Faith not to desire to please him. The Disobedient and Unbelievers are joyn'd together.

Abraham was called to an hard piece of Service; *To leave his Country*, this was

was hard to forsake his Native soil. Jer. 2. 10. *Nescio qua natale solum*; therefore God commands us to pity and relieve Jer. 22. 3. Strangers, because they are comfortless, being out of their own Country. *To leave his Kindred*, this was harder; there is a tender affection between near Relations. If he had gone into a strange Country with his Kindred, their company might have sweetned the bitterness of his banishment; but he must leave his Country as well as Kindred behind him. Nay, he must leave these, and go into a place where he must not have a foot of Land for himself, (*Gen.* 12, 1, 2, 3, 4.) yet *Abraham* obeys. But what was the weight which set the wheels in such quick steady motion, truly his Faith was the spring of his Obedience. Mark, *Heb.* 11. 8, *By Faith* Abraham *when he was called to go out into a place, which he should after receive for an Inheritance, obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went.*

Reason 4. 4. Christ will at the Great Day condemn men to Hell, who live in sins of Omission, because such persons are Hypocrites. Hell is prepared for Hypocrites

crites and Unbelievers, saith Christ, *Matth.* 24. 51. Others, as younger Brethren, receive their part of wrath under them as the Heirs. They are the great Owners of Hell, the chief Landlords of the Valley of Death; others do as it were hold from and under them. So *the Hypocrite in heart heaps up wrath.* The Hypocrite in heart. Hypocrisie lies close in the heart, as the Juglers tools, out of sight. As in the Cellar, under the Parliament, there was nothing to be seen but what was lawful and allowable, Coals and Wood, fit Provision for Winter: But when these were taken away, and the Cellar was searched to the bottom, then the Barrels of Powder appeared, and the Coals and Wood were discover'd to be fewel laid in for the Devils Kitchin. So, many persons who are unblamable (as we say) in their lives, walk without offence, are negatively holy, these seem to be good men, & approved; but if we search them further to the bottom, their Hypocrisie appears, that all this was for vain-glory; or some carnal interest; they heap up wrath, and shall have that wrath which is so dreadful,

ful, that Hell is called by that Name, in great measure; or he himself by his Hypocrisie is daily filling up that Cup of Wrath which he must drink of eternally. An hypocritical Nation are the people of Gods wrath, *Isa.* 10. 5, 6. whom he appoints to ruine. They go about to mock God, as they do men; but they deceive themselves, God is not mocked. They do as those who use much art to hide the wrinkles and defects of Nature, but God can see *Jezabel* under all her paint, and find out the Wife of *Jeroboam*, notwithstanding her disguise, and will punish the Dissembler with the Lake of Fire; and then what shall become of the Professor? All that love and make a lye are doomed to that Dungeon of Darkness. Hypocrisie is the loudest lye that ever was told, because it is given to God himself. It may be said to every Hypocrite as *Peter* to *Ananias*, *Thou hast lyed not to man, but to God*, Act. 5. 4. For he tells God, and would make him believe he forbears gross Sins, and is negatively holy, because it's his Will, when he neglects his positive Precepts, wherein he hath discover'd most of his Will.

Now

Now such as live in Omissions, notwithstanding all their Profession, and all their negative Piety, are but Juglers and Dissemblers. They who are partial in their holiness, are not sound at heart. Whoever obeys any Command out of Conscience, will endeavour Obedience to every Command. *David* is approved for his Integrity, from the universality of his Obedience, 1 *King.* 14. 8. So *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* are declared righteous before God, *i. e.* upright, *walking in all the Statutes and Commandments of the Lord blameless*, Luk. 1. 6. Uprightness makes no baulks in the field of Divine Precepts. Were not this man who lives in Omissions unsound, he would fear Omissions as much as Commissions; for sincerity hates every evil way, *Psal.* 119. 104. and he would be careful to obey Affirmative as well as Negative Commands; for uprightness, as *Moses*, hath the whole Law in its hands; nay, written in its heart, and expounded in its life. But this man, who like a Globons body, toucheth the Law of God in some one point, but meets not in the rest, sheweth plainly that he is

hollow

hollow within, as your Globes are. For observe it, if this man were sincere, and acted upon conscientious grounds, then those pious Reasons upon which he forbears sins of Commission, would incline him to take heed of sins of Omission. If he forbear Commissions, because they are against the Will of God, (which should be the main ground of all Obedience, *Psal.* 119. 5, 6.) then he would also take heed of Omissions, because they are as much against the Will of God as Commissions. If the Authority of God were that which sway'd him in his Negative, the same would move him to positive holiness; for there is the same authority in Negative and in Positive Precepts, *Exod.* 20. The same God that saith, *Thou shalt not steal*, saith, *Thou shalt be diligent to know the state of thy flocks. And thou shalt give to him that asketh.*

Again, if this man abstains from Commissions, because they dishonour God; he would also take heed of Omissions, for they dishonour God also. Every breach of the Law is a dishonour to the Law-giver; *Rom.* 2. 23, 24. Further, if

if he forbear Commissions, because he is redeemed from them with the blood, 1 *Pet.* 1. 17, 18, 19. of Christ, he would take heed of Omissions; for Christ did not only redeem from Sin, but also unto Service, *Tit.* 2. 14. *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* Once more, if he did forbear Commissions, because they are injurious to his own Soul, and deprive him of Heaven and Happiness; then he would take heed of Omissions, for they are as destructive to his Soul, and will as certainly hinder it of Heaven, as the Text assureth us. So that upon whatsoever conscientious grounds he forbears Commissions, he would upon the same grounds take heed of Omissions, which he not doing, proclaims himself an Hypocrite, and as such, is most justly condemned to die eternally. He that forbears sin from a Principle of Grace, will be as careful to do good, as to abstain from evil. Restraining Grace matters not much the omission of good, but renewing Grace or Holiness in Truth cannot allow it. Such a man chooseth

the things that please God, *Isa.* 56. 4.

CHAP. XXVI.

1. Use. *Of the Doctrine by way of Information: How dreadful will be the Condition of those that live in sins of Commission.*

HAving explained the Doctrine, by describing the nature and danger of sins of Omission, as also the Reasons why Christ will sentence those that are guilty of them to an eternal banishment from his presence, and to eternal torments with the Devil and his Angels; I now proceed to the Application of the Point. This Doctrine may be useful, 1. By way of Information. 2. By way of Examination. 3. By way of Exhortation.

1. The Doctrine is useful by way of Information.

First use of Information. 1. If Christ will condemn men for sins of Omission at the Great Day, what will become of them that are guilty of gross Crimes, and who live in sins of Com-

Commission? These must be doubly punished, for they are guilty of Omissions and Commissions too. If they who feed not the Hungry, and cloath not the Naked, shall be damned; surely they who take meat out of the mouths of the Poor, and rob the Needy of their Raiment, by fraud or force, shall be doubly damned. If they be sent to Hell, who visit not the sick and imprisoned; how doleful will their Judgment be who wound the Servants of Christ, and cast them into Prison? If the meer civil man be excluded the highest Heaven, surely the scandalous Sinner shall be cast into the lowest Hell, *Jer.* 22. 13. *Woe to him that buildeth his House by unrighteousness, and his Chambers by wrong.*

If the Tree that is void of good fruit be hewn down, and cast into the fire, (*Matth.* 3. 10.) what will become of the Tree that aboundeth in evil fruit? If barrenness of good expose to Divine Vengeance, what will fruitfulness in evil do? If the Fig-Tree that had leaves and no Figs was cursed, and wither'd away, what curse shall befal those Trees that bear Gall and Wormwood? *Whose*

Grapes are the Grapes of Sodom, *and whose Clusters are the Clusters of* Gomorrah. If men shall perish who call not on the Name of God, what shall become of them who blaspheme the Name of God? If they who hear not the Word of God shall be destroy'd, what destruction shall befal them who deride it, and mock at it? If those whose feet run not the ways of Gods Commandments, who lift not up their [illegible] to Heaven and pray, whose hands are folded in their Bosoms, and whose tongues talk not of Judgment, shall be cast into the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever; where shall they be cast whose Feet are swift to shed blood, whose Eyes are full of Adultery, and cannot cease from sin; whose Hands are full of Bribery and Extortion, and whose Tongues are full of cursing and lying, and whose Throat is an open Sepulchre.

What Tongue can tell the misery that will befal such Sinners at the Great Day? If not relieving the Poor, and not supplying the Needy, and not visiting the Fatherless and Widow, the Sick and Imprisoned, cause such a severe

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Sentence to be denounced against them, as, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels for ever*; what Sentence shall be denounced against those that *grind the faces of the Poor, that make Musick of their Moans*, Isa. 3. 15. *That sell them for a pair of shooes*, Amos 2. 6. *Who oppress the Poor, and crush the Needy*, Amos 4. 1. *And who slay the Widow and Fatherless?*

Go to you rich men, weep and howl, for the miseries that shall come upon you. Your Riches are corrupted, and your Garments moth-eaten. Your Gold and Silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Behold, the hire of the Labourers, which have reaped down your Fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them that have reaped, are entred into the Ears of the Lord of the Sabbath. Ye have condemned and killed the Just; and he doth not resist you, James 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6. Those sins that are crying, and do more especially require Vengeance at the hands of God, and provoked Divine Justice to take notice of them, are sins of Commission.

As Murder, *Gen* 4. 10. *The Voice of thy Brothers blood crieth to me from the ground.* Sodomy, *The cry of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *is great, because their sin is grievous*, Gen. 18. 20. Oppression of Gods Servants, *Exod.* 3. 7. or of any Widows or Fatherless. *If thou afflict the Widow and the Fatherless, and they cry unto me: I will surely hear their cry, for I am gracious*, Exod. 22. 23. Or of any Poor and Needy, as in the Text of *James* 5. 4. *The cry of the Labourers are entred into the Ears of the Lord.*

1. These Sinners who are guilty of these gross Commissions, are guilty of Omissions also: They have the weight of both sorts of sins to press them to Hell. A man may be guilty of Omissions, as not to believe, not to pray, not to examine his own Soul, *&c.* and yet be free from gross Commissions; he may be no Lyar, no Thief, no Oppressor, no Murtherer, no Adulterer, at least in regard of the outward acts which I intend here: But a man cannot live in gross Commissions, but he must also live in Omissions; the Oppressor must omit to relieve the poor. He that destroys life, must neglect

lect to save it. Besides, they who live in such Commissions must omit Faith and Repentance, which are inconsistent with them; they must neglect daily to call on God, for prayer would make them leave such sinning; but indeed such sinning makes them leave of (though possibly they did sometimes begin to seek God in a formal way,) praying. Those in the 5. of *James*, who oppressed the Labourers, who condemned and killed the just, (gross Commissions) had their Riches corrupted, and Garments moth-eaten, *i. e.* were guilty of Omissions, would rather their wealth should waste with rust, and their Rayments with moths, than bestow any on the Poor. Those in the 4. of *Hos.* 1, 2. who were guilty of Swearing and Lying, and Killing, and Stealing, and Adultery, omitted Truth, and Mercy, and the Knowledge of God.

2. Sins of Commission (I mean those gross Crimes) do more openly dare God than Omissions do. By Omissions we deny him, but by such Commissions we dare him, and defie him. Such Sinners, as it were, bid God do his worst,

they fear him not. They do (at leaſt implicitly) mock at his Threatnings, and deride his Reproofs, and ſlight his Judgments that are executed on their Fellows before their own faces. They ſpeak in the Language of the *Jews*, *Iſa.* 5. 19. *That ſay, Let him make ſpeed and haſten his work, that we may ſee it, and let the Counſel of the holy One of* Iſrael *draw nigh and come, that we may know it.* Theſe jear at Gods Judgments, and mock at his Menaces; they credit not his Comminations, nor expect their Execution. They look on the words of their Prophets as meer wind, and the matter of their Propheſie as a meer mockery. *Let him make ſpeed*, &c. *and the Counſel of the holy One of* Iſrael *draw nigh*, i. e. you have much and long told us, that your holy One, forſooth, who cannot abide ſin, *and who is of purer eyes then to behold Iniquity*, will execute his Judgments on us for our ſins, and that this is by Counſel eſtabliſhed, and cannot be reverſed; we would willingly ſee theſe Judgments ſo much talked of, and do wiſh that they may haſten, and not linger as they do; for we neither be-

believe you, nor fear them. But who were these who spake at this desperate rate? truly those that lived in Commissions, *who brought forth wild Grapes*, Isa. 5.4. who brought forth filthy, naughty, abominable fruit; in stead of Grapes, the Vineyard brought forth Thorns and Briars: These were they who dared the Divine Justice, as if they had been incarnate Devils.

3. Gross sins of Commission are more directly contrary to the very light of Nature. Indeed it is against the light of Nature not to feed the Hungry, and cloath the Naked, and help the Distressed; but it's much more against the light of Nature to oppress the Poor and Needy, and slay the Widow and Fatherless. Because natural light is much more disturbed by gross Commissions than by bare Neglects; it appears, that those are more against a natural Conscience than these. We read, that the natural light of the Heathen did discover the sinfulness of their Commissions, and condemn them for them, *Rom.* 1. [illegible]. And that the *Barbarians*, by the light of Nature, could discover the evil of Murder,

der, and how Vengeance, like a Blood-Hound, did purſue the violent man, to take and ſlay him, *Act.* 28. 4. Now that which ſo directly oppoſeth not only Scripture, but Nature, and that which a man will do (as it were) violence to his own Conſcience that he may commit, muſt unqueſtionably be dreadful, and out of meaſure ſinful. As the Apoſtle ſaith, *To him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is ſin,* James 4. 17. *ult.* So ſay I to him that knoweth he ſhould not do theſe evils, and doth them, to him they are ſins, *i. e.* a wickedneſs with a witneſs. They have more of enmity againſt God, and contempt of his Mind, and have ſadder marks of Divine Vengeance. But what ſins are more againſt knowledge, than thoſe that are not only committed in ſpight of Scripture, but alſo of Nature it ſelf. No Vinegar ſo ſharp, as that which is made of the ſharpeſt Wine. *He that knoweth his Maſters Will, and doth it not, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes.* He that knoweth his Maſters Will, is, that he ſhould forbear ſuch ſins, and yet commits them, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes, *Luke* 12. 4. Groſs

4. Gross sins of Commission are more scandalous to men, and bring more dishonour to God. They give greater offence to men, good men are grieved by them. *Lots* righteous Soul was vexed with the unclean conversation of the *Sodomites*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 7. *David* tells us, *Rivers of Tears ran down his eyes, because the wicked broke Gods Law*, Psal. 119. 136. *Jeremiah* wept in secret for the sins of *Israel*, *Jer.* 13. 17. Wicked mens sins cause godly mens sorrow. They need not disturb the Righteous by their Persecutions of them, they do it sufficiently by their Transgressions against God. As these gross sins grieve the good, so they harden the bad: Others are encouraged to dress themselves by such foul and false Glasses. Vile Sinners presume their states good though their lives be bad, because they are no worse than such and such, (possibly who are learned, and rich, and therefore counted wise men,) and therefore whatever befals them, they shall fare as well as others. Alas how many walk more by Patterns than by Commands, and so are led by following others to Hell! And how deep

Jer. 23. 14.

deep will they be damned, who draw others after them to Sin and Hell? They who forsake the Law, praise the wicked, *Prov.* 28. 4. i. e. commend them for their wickedness, as they who keep the Law condemn them. Gross Commissions dishonour God most; they cause others to speak ill of God, and disgracefully of Religion. *Nathan* tells *David*, That by his Uncleanness and Murder, *He had caused the Enemies of God to blaspheme*, 2 Sam. 12. If a Child of God commit one such noisome act, the wicked quickly take the scent, and a Cry is raised among the whole Pack, who with open mouth upon this pursue and blaspheme God and godliness. By these particulars it appears, that gross Commissions are sins of the greatest size, and therefore must have the greatest severity. If they are used as Bastards who met not *Israel* with bread and water, how will God use them at last who meet his people with Bonds and Fetters, with Fire and Fagot? If Christ pronounce such a dreadful Sentence in the Text against the (Comparative) *green Tree, what shall become of the dry?*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

Negative godliness is not enough. Christ's impartiality in Judgment.

IN the second place, If Christ will condemn men at the Great Day for sins of Omission, it may inform us, that a negative Religion, or negative Christianity, is not enough. Many please themselves that they are Gracious, because they are not openly Vicious; and that they are Pious, because they are not scandalously Prophane; but they mistake and deceive themselves. It is good not to do evil, but it is evil not to do good. Negative Christians are as it was said of *Galba*, *Potius extra vitia quam cum virtute:* Rather seemingly free from Vice, than really filled with Virtue. Or at best, as was reported of *Cato*, That he was *homo virtuti similimus*, A man that looked like a virtuous person. *Second use of Information.*

How many civil men presume their persons holy, because they are not so filthy as those who rake in Ditches and Kennels, and defile themselves daily with

with ſcandalous Abominations; and they preſume their ſtates to be good, and themſelves in the way to Heaven, becauſe they are no Drunkards, no Sweaters, no Adulterers, no Theeves, no Murderers; when for all this they ſhall be caſt to Hell, becauſe they are no Believers, no Penitents, no obedient Subjects to the King of Saints, *Becauſe they know not God, and obey not the Goſpel*, 2 Theſſ. 1. 7, 8. Such men are farther diſtant from good than from evil. Ceaſing from evil is not enough, it's but one ſtep Heaven-ward; doing of good muſt accompany it, or it will be of ſmall moment.

I confeſs, when I behold a civil man, who is harmleſs in his Carriage, unblamable (in regard of ſcandal) in his publick Converſation, and courteous in his Behaviour to all; I cannot but reſpect him, and am ready to wiſh (as *Athanaſius*, that all the World of Atheiſts and prophane Wretches would turn Hypocrites) that all ſcandalous Sinners would turn Civilians, and come ſo far towards Holineſs; but yet I muſt ſay, that this is ſcarce half way to Chriſtianity.

nity. He is not half a Saint, who is but a negative Saint. The forbearance of groſs Corruptions is the eaſieſt and leaſt part of Religion, and therefore will not ſpeak any man in a ſtate of Salvation. The Tree that is barren, and without good fruit, is for the fire, as well as the Tree that brings forth evil fruit.

For men to think to excuſe themſelves that they do no hurt, wrong neither Man, Woman, or Child, and are not (as the Phariſee ſaid) as the Publicans, who generally were Oppreſſors, is but a vain fooliſh thing. The idle Servant might have ſaid, Lord, I did no harm with my Talent, I did not lay it out in Rioting and Drunkenneſs, or any way to thy diſhonour; I only hid it, and did not improve it, *Matth.* 25. yet this was enough to condemn him. Can we call ground good ground, for bearing no weeds, if it never bring forth good Corn? Or do we count that Servant a good Servant, who doth not wrong his Maſter in his Eſtate, by purloining or waſting it, if he live idle all day, and neglect the buſineſs his Maſter appoints him. Believe it, *Reader*, thou mayſt not

not be morally evil to the abomination of men, and yet not spiritually good to the acceptation of God. He keeps no Law of God, who minds only the negative part of it. A life free from enormity is too often accompanied with an heart full of iniquity. And that this negative Holiness is insufficient, will appear if we consider,

1. That the Holy Ghost characterizeth a godly man both negatively and positively. The Scripture tells us, That a true Christian minds both parts of the Law, its commanding part as well as its forbidding part. When the Holy Ghost speaks of *Davids* goodness, he tells us, That he served the Wills of God in his Generation, not only his forbidding-will, but also his commanding-will, *Act.* 13.36. When *Job* is commended as a godly man, he is said *to eschew evil*, there was his negative Holiness; and *to fear God*, there was his positive Holiness, *Job* 1.1. & 8. The *Psalmist* describes the happy man by his holiness both ways.

1. By way of Negation, *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the Counsel of the Ungodly*, (i.e. that committeth not wicked-

wickedneſs, which is the conſultation of the Ungodly,) *nor ſtandeth in the way of Sinners,* (i. e. that goeth not on with pleaſure in any courſe of prophaneneſs,) *nor ſitteth in the Seat of the ſcornful,* (i. e. that hardneth not not his heart againſt advice and admonition, *&c.*)

2. By way of Poſition, *But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in that Law doth he meditate day and night.* His affection to the Law, and his meditation in it are both poſitive; and without theſe the man could neither be holy nor happy. He might have been able to ſay, *I have not walked in the Counſel of the Ungodly, nor ſtood in the way of Sinners, not ſate in the Seat of the ſcornful*; and yet been a wicked and curſed man; for Negatives neither ſpeak nor make any man holy. It is a poſitive quality, that gives being, perfection, and denomination to Piety. Therefore *Jehu* is branded for a wicked man, notwithſtanding all his zeal againſt *Baal*, becauſe he took no heed to walk in the Law of the Lord God of *Iſrael*, 1 *King.* 10. 29, 30, 31. Philoſophers tell us, That motions are imperfect, and but in *fieri*, whilſt

they are paſſing from the *Terminus a quo*, and are not perfect, or *in facto eſſe*, till the *Terminus ad quem* be attained. Whilſt a man is departing from evil, he is but an imperfect Chriſtian; when he comes to the doing of good, which is the end of the former, then he is a Chriſtian indeed.

2. The Law, which is the Rule of Religion, is Affirmative as well as Negative. Every man is ſo far perfect in his Calling, or in any Art, as he agrees with his Rule. And every man is ſo far religious (and no farther) as he agreeth with the Will of God revealed in his Word, which is the Rule of Religion; *Gal. 6. 16. As many as walk according to this Rule, peace be to them*, &c. Now this Rule hath Poſitive as well as Negative Commands. Nay, all its Negative Commands have (as hath been ſhewn before) ſomewhat poſitive in them, and therefore negative holineſs cannot be ſufficient. He that makes not Conſcience of every part of Gods Will, makes Conſcience of no part of Gods Will. *He that denieth ungodlineſs and worldly luſts*, becauſe the Law, his Rule, forbids

bids them, *will alſo live righteouſly, ſoberly, and godly*, becauſe the ſame Rule commands them, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. Indeed all true eſchewing of evil doth proceed out of love to good; ſo that he who doth not delight in good, and do it, cannot eſchew evil out of any good Principle. Obſerve the Rule, *Epheſ.* 4. 23, 24. *And be renewed in the Spirit of your mind. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. Iſa.* 1. 15. But men love to be compleat in every thing, but that which deſerves exactneſs.

3. An Heathen may be negatively religious. A *Cato*, a *Seneca*, an *Ariſtides*, may be free from Intemperance, Bribery, Injuſtice, Uncleanneſs, and all groſs ſins; and can we think that Religion ſufficient for us which Heathens may attain to. Is there nothing revealed by the Sun-light of Scripture for us to do, which they were unable to ſee by the dim Ruſh-candle of Nature. The Holy Ghoſt acquaints us with the condition of the Heathen, *Epheſ.* 2. 12. *That they were without God, without Chriſt, ſtrangers to the Covenant of Promiſe, and*

aliens from the Commonwealth of Iſrael, *and without hope in the World.* In which words we have their dreadful eſtate, how far they are from any Saviour, and ſo from any hope of Salvation; which would not be, if their negative holineſs were ſufficient to make them happy.

Third uſe of Information.

3. If Chriſt will condemn men for ſins of Omiſſion at the Great Day, then it may inform us of the Juſtice and Righteouſneſs of Chriſt. It's ſaid of Chriſt, *That he loveth Righteouſneſs, and hateth Iniquity,* Pſal. 45. And again, *That he ſhall judge the world in Righteouſneſs,* Act. 17. 31. Herein it appears:

1. Becauſe he ſpares no Sins. He condemneth thoſe that live in Omiſſions (little light ſins in the imaginations of men) as well as thoſe that live in Commiſſions. He ſends to Hell thoſe that do not relieve, as well as thoſe that rob his people. He poureth out his wrath upon them that do not viſit his Members in Priſon, as well as thoſe that caſt them into Priſon. Thoſe ſins that are Peccadilloes in the Worlds eye, have felt the heavy weight of his hand. The man that gather'd a few ſticks, was deſtroy'd with ſtones.

ſtones. *Uzzah* touch'd the Ark out of kindneſs, but God ſmote him with death for it. *Moſes* for omitting the Circumciſion of his Child, was like to have loſt his life. *Aarons* two Sons, *Nadab* and *Abihu* neglected (as is ſuppoſed by Expoſitors) to fetch fire from the Altar to burn their Sacrifices, and were deſtroy'd with fire from Heaven, *Levit.* 10. The impartiality of Chriſt is evident herein, that at the Great Day he will bid the Civil as well as the Scandalous Sinner depart from him into everlaſting fire.

2. Becauſe he ſpareth no Sinners. He ſaith to all thoſe on his left hand, whether Rich or Poor, Great or Small, High or Low, if guilty of theſe Omiſſions, *Depart from me into everlaſting fire.* He is no reſpecter of perſons, he ſpareth none for their greatneſs and ſtrength. His hand reacheth the talleſt Cedars, and plucks up the ſtrongeſt Oaks. Neither Power nor Majeſty can free or exempt perſons from his ſeverity. If Princes and Potentates will omit their Duty, they muſt expect to feel his Fury: *Pharaoh*, *Jeroboam*, *Ahab*, *Ahaz*, *Nebuchadnezzar* Rev. 6. 15.

chadnezzar, *Herod*, might neglect their Duties to men, and escape punishment from men, but could not neglect their Duties to God at so easie a rate. As all their sins were within the view of his Omniscience, so all their persons were within the reach of his Vengeance, and that found them out to their cost.

He spareth none for their nearness to him. He beholdeth them afar off that are very near to him, when they make bold with him. Judges on Earth may sometimes (though sinfully always) favour their Kindred in an unrighteous cause, but he judgeth otherwise. *Though* Coniah *be to be as the signet on my right hand, I will pluck him thence*, Jer. 22. 24. *Israel* was the neerest people to God of any people in the world, *Psal.* 148. *ult.* with *Deut.* 4. 7. and *Moses* was the neerest to God of any of the people of *Israel*, yet they were excluded his Rest, for not believing his Word; and he was denied entrance into *Canaan*, for not sanctifying Gods Name.

3. He judgeth all according to Law. This is another requisite to suffice: He will not condemn any for their Omissi-

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ons or Commissions, but according to Law. We count that Judge just indeed that keeps the Law, and will not upon any account swerve from that. Our Lord Jesus, when he sentenceth those that neglect to feed the Hungry, and cloath the Naked, *&c. to everlasting fire*, proceedeth according to Law exactly. These persons (as hath been before proved) are under the Law of Works, and so must stand or fall for ever, as they obey or disobey that Law. Now that Law condemneth for Omissions, and not doing our Duties, as well as for Commissions, and abounding in enormities. It saith, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the Book of the Law, to do them*, Gal. 3. 13. Observe, the Law curseth those that omit, that continue not to do their Duties, as well as those that do the contrary.

4. He will render to every man according to his Works. He may punish, and doth in this World less; but neither in the other nor in this more than our Inquities deserve. All mens sins are not equal, therefore all mens sufferings shall

not be equal. According to the degree of mens defilements, ſuch ſhall be the degree of their puniſhment. He diſtinguiſheth between ſins and ſins, between them that afflict his Children, and thoſe that relieve them not in their Afflictions; between thoſe that hale them to Priſons, and put them to death, and thoſe that viſit them not in priſon. He exacteth not of men more than is meet.

He will put a difference between Heathens, who have little means to know and worſhip him aright, and *Jews*, *To whom were committed the Oracles of God, to whom pertained the Adoption, and the Covenant, and the giving of the Law, and the Promiſes.* Theſe have greater Means and Mercies, and therefore greater Wrath and Severity. *Tribulation and Anguiſh, Indignation and Wrath on the ſoul of every man that doth evil, on the* Jew *firſt, and alſo on the* Gentiles, *Rom.* 3. 2. *Rom.* 9. 4. *Rom.* 2. 7. *You only have I known, therefore you will I puniſh of all the Families of the Earth for your Iniquities*, Amos 3. 2. He will diſtinguiſh between *Jews* and Chriſtians that live under the Goſpel. Omiſ-

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ſions are more tollerable, and leſs puniſhable among *Heathens* than *Jews*, and among *Jews* before Chriſts coming, than thoſe *Jews* that lived under the Goſpel, and ſaw Chriſt's Miracles, and heard his Sermons, with thoſe Chriſtians that enjoy the Goſpel, *Matth.* 11. 21, 22, 23. It will be more tollerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* than for *Corazin* and *Bethſaida*, and for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* than for *Capernaum*, becauſe theſe lived under greater Light and Helps, and yet continued in the neglect of Faith and Repentance.

He will not puniſh thoſe that omit their Duties ignorantly (when they are diligent to improve what advantages they have for knowledge) ſo ſeverely as he will thoſe who neglect their Duties knowingly. God expects a life anſwerable to that Light which he hath given us; and if we impriſon his Truth in unrighteouſneſs, we provoke him in the higheſt degree. *He that knoweth his Maſters Will, and doth it not, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes. He that knoweth not his Maſters will, and doth it not, ſhall be beaten with few ſtripes.* Both

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shall be beaten, but the former suffer more stripes than the latter. It's cold comfort, yet herein the Righteousness of the Judge appeareth, that some who are guilty of Omissions shall have a cooler Hell than others; *For he rendreth to every man according to his Works*, Rom. 2.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Practical godliness necessary.

Fourth use of Information.

4. IF Christ will condemn men at the Great Day for Sins of Omission, for not visiting the Sick and Imprisoned, and not relieving the Hungry and Naked: Then it may inform us, That nothing short of practical godliness will speak a mans estate safe at this Day, or fore-speak his estate to be comfortable at that day. The want of this is the cause of these mens condemnation: They might forbear injuring the Saints, they might speak them fair, bid them, *Be ye fed*, *Be ye cloathed*. They might wish them well, they might honour and respect

respect them (as *Herod* did the *Baptist*) for their sanctity and righteousness, yet because they were void of this practical godliness, they gave them not wherewith to be fed and cloathed; they are banished the presence of Christ, and adjudged to the Curses and Company of Devils.

1. A great Profession will not do without this practical godliness. Some soar high in their Professions of, and pretences to greater strictness, and degrees of Grace and Holiness than others, who alas fall foully often on Earth, and always into Hell, for lack of this practical godliness. As some great Tradesmen, who living wholly upon their Credit with others, without any stock of their own, quickly break and miscarry. A Profession is but as the leaves of a Tree (a sign of fruit) not the fruit it self. There is a vast difference between leaves and fruit. Some think that Christ had not cursed the Fig-Tree, if it had been without leaves as well as without fruit: But when by its leaves it professed to have fruit, and invited him to it in expectation thereof, and disappointed him, he pre- *Vide* Robinson, 1. *part*, 132

preſently claps a Curſe on it, that withers it at the very roots. The Phariſees were great Profeſſors, made broad their Philacteries, where-ever they went, would be known for perſons extraordinarily pious and religious, yet how wicked was their ſtate, *Matth.* 5. 20. *Except your Righteouſneſs exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall never enter into the Kingdom of God*; and how woful is their Condition? *Woe to you Scribes, Phariſees, Hypocrites,* (ye live in Omiſſions) *ye neglect the great things of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith,* Matth. 23. 23.

2. Great Gifts and Parts will not do without this. A man may have choice natural Abilities, rare acquired Accompliſhments; yea, common Gifts of the Spirit of God, and yet for want of this practical godlineſs be damned. What amiable words come out of *Balaams* mouth, he ſpeaks like a Saint; yea like an Angel? how often have I heard his Propheſies, with great admiration and affection? his Tongue hath melted my heart; and yet he had no good works, for all his many good words; and his

lack

lack of practical godliness ruin'd him. What special endowments had they who preached in the Name of Christ, *and in his Name cast out Devils, and in his Name did many marvailous works*; and yet were cast to Devils for being Workers of Iniquity, as all are who are void of this practical godliness, *Matth.* 7. 21, 23. What excellent Gifts doth the Apostle suppose a man to have *the gift of Propheſing, of understanding all Mysteries, and all Knowledge, and of all Faith, so as to remove Mountains, and yet if he have not Charity, he is nothing*, &c. 1 Cor. 13. 2, 3. If he love not his Brother, and express it not to his power, by spiritual and bodily Charity, (which is part of practical godliness) he is nothing in Gods Eye, what ever he may be in the eyes of men.

3. Great Priviledges, with seeming performances, without this practical godliness, will not do. They who had Tabernacle, Temple, Ark, Covenant, Promises, for want of this were destoy'd; The Ark could not preserve them. Afterwards, when they nelected practical godliness, the Temple could not protect

tect them. He bids the *Jews* go and see what he did to his place at *Shiloh* for their Iniquities. He made them monuments of his Fury, who had been patterns of his Pity, when they neglected this practical godliness.

How meanly doth God discourse of seeming Obedience to his own Institutions, when this is neglected. Though they had his own Divine stamp on them, and were signs of the sweetest Sacrifice, and the most acceptable Service imaginable, and he had often taken delight in them; yet when they left off to do well, observe his Language about them. *To what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifice to me, saith the Lord, bring no more vain Oblations, Incense is an abomination to me: Your new Moons and your appointed Feasts my Soul hateth, I cannot bear them.* What strange expressions are here of his own Institutions? But what's the reason? Truly, the lack of this, *vers.* 17. *Learn to do well, seek Judgment, relieve the Oppressed, Judge the Fatherless, Plead for the Widow*, Isa. 1. 11, to 18. And how peremptorily doth he beat men off from trusting in their Privi-

ledges,

ledges, as of no advantage without this practical godlineſs. *Think not*, ſaith the Baptiſt, *to ſay within your ſelves, We have* Abraham *to our Father*, (this was a great Priviledge, for with him and his Seed was the Covenant made, and to them were Circumciſion, and the Paſſover, the Seals of it given,) but what counſel doth he give them? truly, to mind practical godlineſs. *Bring forth fruit meet for Repentance*, i. e. for all the great priviledge in which you take ſo much pride, and upon which you lay ſo much ſtreſs; yet you can never flee from the wrath to come, unleſs you bring forth good fruit, *fruit meet for repentance*; ſuch fruit as will ſpeak your hearts to be changed, ſuch fruit as is ſuitable to a renewed nature. This, and this alone is practical godlineſs. The Coherence in that, *Matth.* 3. 8, 9, 10. deſerves our Obſervation. And *John* ſaith unto the Phariſees, *O Generation of Vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come: bring forth therefore fruit meet for repentance. And think not to ſay within your ſelves, We have* Abraham *to our Father: For I ſay unto you,*

that

that God is able of these stones to raise up Children to Abraham. Do not think that God is bound to, and must save you, because ye are *Abrahams* Seed, for God can of stones make Sons of *Abraham. And now also the Ax is laid to the root of the Tree, therefore every Tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.*

CHAP. XXIX.

The Condition of men only Civil is unsafe and sad.

5. IF Christ will condemn men at the Great Day for sins of Omission, for not relieving the Poor and Afflicted: It may inform us, That the condition of men meerly civil, and negatively religious, will be woful at that day. Why? Because Christ will command them to depart from him into everlasting fire. Ah how dreadful will it be to take an eternal Farewel of *the Lord of Life, the God of all Grace, the Well of Salvation*; and to enter into a state of Death and Wrath,

Wrath, and that for ever. *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the Sinner and Ungodly appear?* 1 Pet. 3. By Sinner, I suppose, is meant the scandalous man, who liveth in Commission. It's said of *Mary Magdalen*, who had been guilty of notorious Enormities, *Luke 7. For she is a Sinner.* And it's said of the Publican, (whose whole Tribe was infamous for Extortion and Bribery) *That he was a Sinner. He is gone to be a Guest to one that is a Sinner.* By Ungodly, as the very word ἀσεβὴς, signifieth, is meant one that liveth in Omissions, one that liveth without the Worship of God; *i. e.* without the Love and Fear, the Acknowledgment and Adoration of this God. Worship is that high Honour and Solemn Respect that the Creature owes to God: Not to give him this, is ungodliness. An ungodly man is one that doth not seek God, nor trust God, nor obey God; that doth not own him in his Mercies as his Father and Benefactor, nor in his Judgments as a wise Master, that would by Chastisements make him partaker of his Holiness. *Now if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall*

the ſinner and ungodly appear? If there be a difficulty in the Salvation of the Righteous, there is a neceſſity of the damnation of the Sinner and ungodly. If the Righteous get ſo hardly to Heaven, the Sinner and Ungodly muſt ſurely be caſt into Hell. Where ſhall the Sinner and Ungodly, thoſe that are guilty of theſe Omiſſions and Commiſſions, appear? They muſt appear ſomewhere, but they can appear no where with comfort, or without unſpeakable horrour. Where ſhall they appear? before God? why, they hate his Being, deſpiſe his Dominions, ſlight his Love, diſobey his Laws, and indeed ſeek his Life; and can they appear before him? Can they look for a ſmile from his Face, who loath him perfectly? or can they ſtand before his Frowns and Fury? Do they know the weight of his Hand, the killing-darts of his Eye, and the Power of his Anger? No ſurely, they cannot appear before him. *Thou, even thou art to be feared, and who may ſtand when thou art angry?* Where ſhall they appear? Shall they appear before Chriſt the Judge of Quick and Dead? Before him, who ſometimes invited

vited them earnestly to come to him, and intreated them affectionately to accept of him, and life with him. Shall they appear before him? It's his Call which they have despised, and his Commands which they have violated. It's his Blood which they have trampled on, and his Spirit whom they have grieved. They are his Members whom the Sinners have oppressed and wronged, and his Children, and Spouse, and Body, which the Ungodly have neglected, and not relieved. O how glad would they be if the Rocks would crush them to pieces, that they might be deliver'd from the wrath of the Lamb, *Rev.* 6. 15. Their severe Sentence which may make every Ear to tingle, and Heart to tremble, that hears it, will proceed from his mouth; *Then shall he say unto them on his left hand, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire.* But where shall these Sinners and Ungodly appear? Shall they appear before the Saints? Alas, with what face can they behold them, whose Persons they have imprison'd, whose Estates they have plundered, whose Profession they have derided,

whoſe Names they have abuſed, and whom they have often wiſhed out of the way, and thought the Troublers of the Family, and Town, and Country where they lived? If the Saints plead it muſt be againſt them, for they cannot but as Juſtices agree and concur with the Sentence of the Judge as righteous and juſt.

But where ſhall they appear? Shall they appear before the Law? No, that condemneth them for the leaſt Omiſſion, for the ſmalleſt Commiſſion to Hell fire; they are the Prohibitions of the Law that the Sinner hath tranſgreſſed, and they are the Precepts of the Law that the Ungodly hath not obeyed; and therefore the Law curſeth them both to the uttermoſt. The Law enableth Sin to bind over the Tranſgreſſor of it to the Wrath and Curſe of God: Hence it's ſaid, *The ſtrength of Sin is the Law.*

But where ſhall they appear? Shall they appear before the Goſpel? No, their Omiſſions have moſt relation to the Goſpel. They have not believed the truth of it. They have not embraced the goodneſs of it. They have not obeyed

obeyed the Precepts of it. They rejected the tenders of Pardon and Life made to them in the Gospel, with frequency and fervency. They would not come to their Physitian to be healed of their mortal Diseases. Though he came to them and offer'd his help freely, and assured them of effectual and speedy recovery, if they would be directed by him; yet they rejected the Counsel of God against themselves; therefore the Gospel will condemn as surely and more sorely than the Law. *If the word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every Disobedience received a just recompence of Reward: How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation.* Heb. 2. 2, 3 Joh. 3. 19.

And again, *Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy?*

But where shall they appear? Shall they appear on Earth? Surely there will be no Earth then for them to appear in. That Earth which they sported so much in, as *Leviathan* in the waters, and which they were fond of, and delighted in, will be burnt up with fire, and consumed with fervent heat.

But where shall they appear? Shall

they appear in Heaven? Can an unſanctified heart enter into the Holy of Holies? No. *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. An impure Eye cannot behold ſuch an infinitely pure Object. When Angels (ſeated in Heaven as their Habitation) once loſt their purity, they ſoon loſt that place. Heaven could not bear them; 'tis not as *Noahs* Ark, to take in all ſorts, Clean or Unclean. *Into it can in no wiſe enter any thing that is Unclean*, Rev. 21. 27. Neither could they bear Heaven. The ſpiritual delights of that Cœleſtial Court became unſuitable to their polluted Natures. The rareſt Dainties and moſt curious Delicates are altogether unſavoury and unpleaſant to an aguiſh and diſtemper'd Palat.

But where ſhall they appear? If they cannot appear before God their Maker, before the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, before the Saints. Before whom ſhall they appear? If they cannot appear before the Law, before the Goſpel, before what ſhall they appear? It muſt be in Hell, before Devils and damned Spirits, with them to lodge and dwell for ever. Ah, the

Great

Great Day is called *The terrible Day of the Lord Jesus*; and it will be a terrible Day indeed to these meer Civilians.

It is called *the Day of Perdition of ungodly men.* It's to others *a Day of Consolation. Lift up your Heads with joy, for the Day of your Redemption draweth nigh.* A Day of *Promotion*, *It's your Fathers pleasure to give you a Kingdom*, Luke 12. 32. *Joh.* 17. 24. A Day of *Rest* from all their Labours, and Sorrows, and Sufferings, bodily or spiritually, *Rev.* 14. 13. But it's the Day of Perdition of Ungodly men. They who live without God here, must live without him for ever; and this farthest, utmost, endless departure of the Creature from God, who is the only Life and Heaven of him, will be a Death and Hell with a witness. God will be God at that Day in the account of the worst of men, though he be their laughing-stock and sinning-stock at this day.

Though these ungodly ones sit aloft here in the Courts of men, and who but they; *Yet the Ungodly shall not stand in the Judgment*, Psal. 1. 5. At the Great Day when they shal lbe judged, 1. They

ſhall be aſhamed, they ſhall not ſtand, *i. e.* not hold up their heads with joy, but hang down their heads with ſhame, *Dan.* 12. Some ſhall ariſe to ſhame and confuſion of face. 2. *The Ungodly ſhall not ſtand in the Judgment*, i. e. they ſhall not be juſtified. When they ſhall be tried for their Lives and Deaths, for their endleſs unchangeable ſtates, they ſhall be caſt and condemned. When all *Adams* Poſterity ſhall make their perſonal appearance before the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh, to receive their eternal doom; and when the Judge of Quick and Dead cloathed with his Majeſtick Robes of Glory, accompanied with an illuſtrious train of Angels, ſhall ſit down on the Judgment Seat, he ſhall pronounce a Sentence of Condemnation on all ungodly Ones. *If thou Lord ſhouldſt mark Iniquity, O Lord, who ſhould ſtand*, Pſal. 130. 3. *i. e.* If thou Lord ſhould obſerve exactly the beſt mans heart and life, and accordingly deal with him, not one man could be juſtified. *Who ſhall ſtand*; i. e. righteous at thy Bar. 3. *The Ungodly ſhall not ſtand in the Judgment*; i. e. they ſhall not conquer, when

when they shall be impleaded and accused by the Devil and the Law at that day. An Army foil'd, is said *not to stand before their Enemies.* And again, An Army beaten is said *to fall before their Adversaries, Dan.* 11. 25. And the Conquerors are said *to stand*, Ephes. 6. 13 The Devil will bring his large Bills of Indictments into the Court against the Ungodly, for he is ἀντίδικος, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. A Court-Adversary and the Law will second the Devil, and joyn with him in his Accusations; the Sinners Conscience will joyn with both, and assent to the truth of their Indictments. The Ungodly will have no Advocate to plead for him. Christ that sometimes offer'd him that kindness, will now plead against him, and so he must needs fall and be conquer'd by his Enemies.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

Sinners Conviction at the Day of Judgment. The purity of Christs Religion above all others.

Sixth use of Information.

6. IF Christ will say to them on the left hand, *Depart from me, For I was Hungry and ye gave me no meat.* Or if Christ will condemn men for sins of Omission at the Great Dy: It informs us, That Christ will be rational in his most severe proceedings, even to the Conviction of the Sinners own Conscience. I draw this from the Coherence of the verses, Christ first pronounceth the Sentence, *vers.* 41. *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire.* And then *vers.* 42. he gives the reason, *For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat,* &c. which (though at first they seem to question, yet) at last they are muzled and put to silence. *Jude* tells us of solemn Condemnation and solemn Conviction of these ungodly Ones, as the chief business of that Day. *Behold he cometh with ten thousand of his Saints*

Saints to execute Judgment on all, and to convince all that are ungodly amongſt them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodlily committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches which ungodly Sinners have ſpoken againſt him, Jude 14, 15. Execution, by an *Hyſteron Proteron*, is put before Conviction; yet one great work of that Great Day is to convince theſe ungodly Ones, and the ſeverity of the Proceſs is againſt the Ungodly.

This Conviction implyeth:

1. A reflection of Conſcience upon all their paſt and former ſins. Conſcience, as a Glaſs, ſhall repreſent to the Sinner all his luſts (which he hath loved above his Soul and Saviour) in all their ugly features, and loathſome colours: *The Books at that day will be opened*, Rev. 20. 12. *i. e. The Book of Gods Remembrance*, *Mal.* 3. *and the Book of Conſcience.* Sins are not gone as ſoon as done; God records them in his Book of Remembrance, and Conſcience will review them all in that Day of Vengeance. Though it could not be heard by the Sinner in this World, for the noiſe of his carnal delights, and cry of his worldly

worldly delights; yet when it ſets his ſins in order before his eyes in their monſtrous frightful ſhapes, it will thunder in his Ears as *Reuben* to his Brethren, *Did not I tell you of this, and ſay, Do not ſin, and thou wouldſt not hear; therefore all this Wrath, and Fury, and Flames, and Darkneſs, and Chains, are come upon thee.*

2. This Conviction implyeth a ſilencing the Sinner, that he will have nothing to ſay either againſt God, or for himſelf. A man that is convinced, hath his mouth ſtop'd. When the Spirit convinceth the World of ſin, the World hath not a word to ſay againſt the Sin and Guilt, which the Law chargeth on it. *Every mouth is ſtoped, and all the World is guilty before God.* How often is the poor Creature ſelf-convinced and ſelf-condemned here; but ſoon after the ſick qualms go off his ſtomach, and he is revived with the Cordials of ſinful ſhifts and excuſes, wherewith he deludes himſelf, and preſumes he may alſo deceive God; but at the Great Day, as his Convictions will be more killing, ſo they will be more laſting. The man will be dumb and ſpeechleſs when Chriſt

ſhall

ſhall ſay, Why didſt thou deny to relieve my Servants in their wants? Why didſt thou ſlight my Blood, neglect my Worſhip, grieve my Spirit, and omit to obey my poſitive Laws? *Matth.* 22. 3, 4, 5. The very Heathen who ſhall be impriſon'd in the dark dungeon of Hell, for impriſoning the Truth, and holding it in unrighteouſneſs, will not have a motion in their Breaſts of accuſing God for falſe Impriſonment. How certainly then and how fully will the Conſciences of Chriſtians, who lived under the Goſpel, juſtifie God, when he ſhall condemn them for not believing, and not repenting, upon the Meſſages he ſent to them of pardon and life.

7. If Chriſt will condemn men at the Great Day for ſins of Omiſſion, It may inform us of the excellency of the Chriſtian Religion above all other Religions. The excellency of any Religion conſiſteth in the purity of its Precepts, and ſtrictneſs of its Commands; now no Religion is ſo holy in its Commands, and ſo exact in its Laws as the Chriſtian Religion. Moral Duties are advanced by it to their higheſt perfection, and moral Vices

Vices are debased by it to their lowest degradation. *The Commandment of the Lord is pure*, Psal. 19. *Thy Word is very pure.* Christ will condemn men to Hell at the last Day for Omissions as well as Commissions, for neglect of known Duties, as well as for the perpetration of gross Enormities.

1. If we consider the Religion of the Heathen, we shall find that it is vastly inferior in purity to the Christian Religion. Among the *Gentiles* (who lived without the Gospel) it can scarce be said there was any Religion at all, for their Gods were Stocks, and Stones, and Trees, and Fire, and Water, and Beasts, and dead Men; nay, their Precepts were so far from purity, that they commended and commanded impurity. As among the ancient *Babylonians*, in the Worship of *Venus*, the Women prostituted themselves to all Strangers; nay, the very Gods of the Heathen did, according to their own fictitious Writers, patronize all their Impieties, even by their own Patterns. *Jupiter*, the chief forsooth of their Gods, who hath his Name from being an helping Father, com-

commits Inceſt with his own Siſter *Juno*, and his Daughter *Minerva*, *Sodomy* with *Ganymedes*, raviſheth *Europa*, baniſheth his Father *Saturn* out of his Kingdom. *Venus* was a Whore, *Mercury* a Thief, *Bacchus* a Drunkard, *&c.* But to leave theſe, and ſpeak to them that were more ſober in their Underſtandings, and not ſo vain in their Imaginations, who had τὸ ἔργον νόμου, the work of the Law written in their hearts, *Rom.* 2. 14. and improved it to more purpoſe than others; yet theſe pleaſed themſelves with a little outward civility, without any inward or outward practical godlineſs. Their chief devotion conſiſted in abſtaining from groſs ſins, which might expoſe them to the ſhame of men, and the doing ſome external acts of Piety, as ſacrificing and mumbling over a few Prayers that were little ſignificant. O how vaſtly doth the Chriſtian Religion excel this! This Religion of the Heathen doth rather hide ſin then heal it. It doth not root the love of ſin out of the heart, only reſtrain it in the life. But the Chriſtian Religion doth forbid ſin in the Affections

ons as well as in the Converſation, it doth *abſcindere* as well as *abſcondere*, cure ſin as well as cover it. In the beſt Heathen the fire of their Luſts was only raked up, and cover'd with aſhes, from the eyes of the World: But now in the Chriſtian it is quenched, at leaſt in part, and ſhall by degrees be wholly quenched. The Chriſtian Religion doth not only forbid all Sins, or outward Commiſſions, but alſo all Luſts and inward Inclinations. *I beſeech you brethren to abſtain as Pilgrims and Strangers, from all fleſhly Luſts, that war againſt the Soul*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. And a religious Chriſtian doth not only forbear groſs Commiſſions, but alſo abhor ſecret ſinful motions. *I hate vain thoughts, but thy Law do I love*, Pſal. 119.

Thoſe among the Heathen who were the wiſeſt, made nothing of neglecting to give God their love, and fear, and truſt, their higheſt Honour, and ſuperlative Eſteem, and exacteſt Obedience, which are the chief of Religion. They allowed Revenge, in caſe of ſuffering Injury; and ſome of their greateſt Lawgivers ordained Theft to be unpuniſhable,

able, if it could be done cleanly and cleaverly, ſo as not to be found out. They put away their Wives upon any ſmall diſtaſt, and took others during their pleaſure only. Their whole Religion hath not one Prohibition againſt inward Corruptions, nor one Precept for inward heart Duties; and therefore muſt of neceſſity come ſhort of the Chriſtian Religion for Purity.

2. If we conſider the *Turkiſh* Religion, what a bundle of fooleries is *Mahomets* Alcoran, and what a dunghil of filthineſs is the Religion of his Followers. They allow a man as many Wives as he can maintain, and encourage men to murder, with a promiſe of a (Poetical, carnal) Paradiſe to all that ſhall die in the Wars againſt the Chriſtians. They obey the Luſts of their Tyrant in all things, even to the murder of their Soveraigns neareſt Relations, or chiefeſt Miniſters of State, againſt the very light and law of Nature. They do not ſo much as profeſs to mind thoſe heart Prohibitions and Precepts, without which all external Holineſs is but as a rotten Carkaſs, noiſome and unſavoury to

Gods Noſtrils, and without any lovelineſs or life in his Eyes. Nay, the Popiſh Religion, ſo far as it differs from the true Chriſtian Religion, is impure. They have ſins that are Venial, allow publickly of Uncleanneſs. The Pope hath a Revenue out of the Stews; they diſpenſe with *Sodomy*, inceſt, any Sin for money: They place all their Holineſs in ſome external Mortifications, which God never required at their hands. But what doth the Chriſtian Religion do? It reacheth the Heart, and teacheth the Soul: *The Law of the Lord is perfect*, *Pſal.* 19.

1. It directs the whole Man, and gives Laws to all the powers of the Soul, and parts of the Body. It directs us about our Bodies and outward Converſation: It commands *to preſent our Bodies a living Sacrifice to God*, Rom. 12. 1. *and the members of our Bodies as Inſtruments of Righteouſneſs unto Holineſs.* It binds the Eyes, Ears, Tongue, Hands, Feet, all the members to their good behaviour: It allows not any part to be abuſed to prophaneneſs, *Job* 31. 1. *Pſal.* 119. *Pſal.* 37. 30, 31. *Pſal.* 34. 13, 14. *Rom.* 6. 13, 14, 15, 16,

16, 17. It directs us about our Souls: *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul, Pſal.* 19.7. It changeth the nature of the Soul, and opens the eye of it, *and turns it from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God*, Act. 26. 18. It directeth the mind to learn the Knowledge of God, as the richeſt Treaſure, and choiceſt Portion, and only Happineſs of the Creature; 1 *Chron.* 28. 9. *And thou* Solomon, *my Son, know the God of thy Fathers.* It directs the Will to chooſe this God for its ſuitable, and ſatisfying, and everlaſting felicity, *Pſal.* 73. 25. It limits the Affections as to their Objects, and their motion towards thoſe Objects. It forbids inordinate deſires after, or delight in ſublumary Vanities; and commands moderation in our love to all created Comforts. *Let your moderation be known to all men. The time is ſhort, let them that have Wives, be as though they had none*, &c. 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. It enjoyns our love in the greateſt degree to be placed on the worthieſt Object. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and all thy Soul, and all thy Strength*, *Matth.* 22. 37. And

ſo our fear; *Fear him that can caſt Body and Soul into Hell, I ſay unto you fear him.* It keeps all the unruly paſſions within their proper banks and bounds, and preſerves the ſuperior and inferior faculties in their proper places. Now what Religion either of *Moraliſts* or *Mahometans* doth do?

2. As it directs about the whole man, ſo it directs as to every part and paſſage of this mans Converſation. We need never be at a loſs for a Rule, or at a ſtand what to do, if we will but uſe diligence to know and underſtand the revealed Will of God. The Chriſtian Religion directs us in our Callings, whether Magiſtrates, Miniſters, Tradeſmen, Souldiers, *Luk.* 3. It directs us in our Relations, as Huſbands, Wives, Parents, Children, Maſters, Servants, *Epheſ.* 5. *Epheſ.* 6. *Col.* 3. *Col.* 4. It directs us in all Conditions how to demean our ſelves, in Proſperity to be joyful, in Adverſity to conſider how God hath ſet the one againſt the other. In Afflictions to be patient and prayerful, and more ſtudious of a right improvement of them, than of deliverance out of them. Under

Mercies

Mercies it directs us to be thankful to God, the more chearful in his Service, and faithful in the use of our Talents, for the honour of our Master. It directs us in all our Thoughts, *Jer.* 4. 14. Words, *Psal.* 39. 2. Works, *Prov.* 4. 23, 24, 26. It directs us in all our natural Actions, as Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31 *Tit.* 2. 12. In our civil Converses, *Micah* 6. 8. In our religious Duties, how to pray, *James* 5. *James* 1. How to hear, how to receive, 1 *Cor.* 11.

3. Its purity above and beyond all other Religions, appears in this, That it forbids Evil, all Evil, nothing but Evil; it commands Good, whatsoever is Good, and nothing but Good, *Isa.* 1. *Psal.* 32. 14. The Laws of *Lycurgus* among the *Grecians*, and *Numa* among the *Romans*, had somewhat of good in them, but not all prohibited, somewhat that was evil, but not all that was evil: But the Christian Religion is of a larger extent both in its Precepts and Prohibitions. *I have seen an end of all Perfections, but thy Commandments are exceeding broad*, *Psal.* 119. 96. A man with the eye of his Body may behold an end of many worldly Perfections, of many

fair Eſtates, great Beauties, large Parts, hopeful Families; but a man with the eye of his Soul (for by Faith) may ſee an end of all earthly Perfections. He may ſee the World in a flame, and all its Pomp, and Pride, and Glory, and Gallantry, and Crowns, and Scepters, and Riches, and Treaſures, turn'd into aſhes; he may ſee *the Heavens paſſing away like a ſcroll, and the Elements melting with fervent heat, and the Earth with the things thereon conſumed*; and all its Perfections which men doted ſo much on vaniſhed into ſmoke and nothing. It's eaſie to ſee to the end of all terrend Perfections, but its difficult, yea impoſſible to ſee to the end of Divine Precepts: *But thy Commandments are exceeding broad.* Of a vaſt Latitude, beyond our apprehenſion. They are ſo deep, that none can ſadom them, *Pſal.* 36. 6. So high, that they are eſtabliſhed in Heaven, *Pſal.* 119. 48. So long, that they endure for ever, 2 *Pet.* 1. And ſo broad, that none can meaſure them. They are not only broad, but exceeding broad. *Higher than Heaven, longer than the Earth, broader than the Sea.* The

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Commands of God reach the inward parts, the moſt ſecret motions and retired receſſes of the Soul: They reach all the privy thoughts. *They pierce even to the dividing aſunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts and Marrow, and diſcern the thoughts and intents of the heart*, Heb. 4. 12. They reach to all our Actions, to thoſe that ſeem ſmalleſt and of leſs concernment, as well as to thoſe that are greater, and of more concernment.

They reach to the manner, nay circumſtance of Actions. The Divine Law takes notice of all the circumſtances of ſins, as aggravations of ſin. As, 1. From the *time* of Gods patience towards the Sinner; *Theſe three years I came ſeeking fruit*, Luke 13. 2. The *place* where the ſin was committed; *The Sons of* Eli *lay with the Women that aſſembled at the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation*, 1 Sam. 2. 22. 3. From the *ſeaſon* of committing the Sin, *Iſa.* 58. 3, 4. *Behold in the day of your Faſt, ye find pleaſure, and exact all your labour*, &c. 4. From the Condition of the perſon that ſins; *He that eats bread with me, lifts up his*

heels against mee, Joh. 13. 18. A familiar Friend proves a treacherous Enemy. So *Joh.* 3. 10. *Art thou a Master in* Israel, *and knowest not these things?* 5. From the means the person enjoys; *You only have I known, therefore you will I punish for your Iniquities*, Amos 4. Rom. 2. 7. 6. From the manner of committing the Sin; *So they spread* Absalom *a Tent on the top of the house, and* Absalom *went in to his Fathers Concubins in the sight of all* Israel, 2 *Sam.* 16. 22. Impudency in sin doth highly increase it. Were they ashamed when they committed all these Abominations? No, they were not ashamed. But how far are other Religions from observing, much more from condemning men for such sinful circumstances?

CHAP. XXXI.

The holiest have cause of humiliation.

8. IF Christ will condemn men at the Great Day for sins of Omission; *I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat*, &c. Then

Then it may inform us, That the best have abundant cause of humiliation; for the best have in them abundant matter of Condemnation. O how many are our Omissions every day, every hour, and by reason of them we are obnoxious to Hell flames? Good Bishop *Usher*, who for Piety and Learning, was honoured through the Christian World; though he was early converted, and feared the Lord in his Youth; though he was eminently industrious in private, in his Family, in chatechising, and instructing, and praying often every day with, and for them that were committed to his Charge. Though he was a constant Preacher, and that with Judgment and Affection; Though he was singularly famous for his many worthy pieces which he wrote in *Latin* and *English*, yet after all this diligence and labour, when he came to die, the last words almost which he was heard to speak, were, *Lord, in special forgive my Sins of Omission.* Sins of Omission will at death lie heavier on our hearts than we think for in life. If such a laborious person found cause of bewailing his Omissions, surely

Usher's Life.

much

much more cause have Loyterers as we are.

Omissions are fruits of Original Corruption as well as Commissions: It's from that dead stock that we are so defective in bringing forth good fruit. *Paul* layeth his Omissions at this door, *Rom.* 7. 17, to 23. *In my flesh is no good. When I would do good, evil is present with me*, &c. Now whatsoever is the Child of such a monstrous Parent is loathsome, and calls on us for sorrow and self-abhorrency. Holy *Job* did but suspect his Children to be guilty of Omissions, of not sanctifying the Name of God in their Hearts, according to their Duties, at their Feasts and Meetings; *And he riseth early and offereth Sacrifice, according to the number of them all*, Job 1. 4, 5. He goeth to God and begs Pardon for them, and the blessing of God upon every one of them. *It may be*, saith he, *my Sons have sinned, and cursed* (and not blessed God, so *Calvin* reads it,) *God in their hearts: Thus did* Job *continually.* Now if *Job* upon a supposition that his Sons might be guilty of Omissions, was so constant in his addresses to God on

their

their behalf, by way of humiliation, acknowledging their Iniquity, and beseeching his Mercy: What cause have we on the behalf of our own Souls, who know that we often offend God by Omissions, and know not how often we offend him by them? God may say to thee and me, *Reader, Is not thy Wickedness great, and Iniquities infinite*, as he to *Job*, *Job* 20. 5. Where by Wickedness, Expositors understand Commissions, or those Sins by which we prejudice or injure others, and by Iniquities, Omissions, by which we neglect, according to our Duties, to relieve others. And *Eliphaz* calls his Wickedness *great*, because, as I have shew'd in the first Information, they are in some respects greater, more hainous than sins of Omission; and his *Iniquities infinite*, because sins of Omission are more numerous than sins of Commission. Corrupt Nature can much better forbear what it hath an inclination and propensity to, than do that which it hath a dislike of, and an enmity against.

For their nature I have proved, that they are very ponderous, that they are

breaches

breaches of a positive Law, grieve the Holy Ghost, provoke God, defile the Conscience; yea, and destroy the Soul for ever, (how light soever some make of them,) and for their number they are *infinite*, beyond all account or reckonings. If they were small sins, their number would compensate their lightness; grains of sand are little, but an heap of them together is weighty, *Prov.* 27. 3. *The sand is weighty. In many things we offend all*, James 3. 2. Now how should the nature and number of these sins humble us every day before the the Lord? What hour is there when we are awake, wherein we may not do more good than we do? When did we in visiting a Friend, or conferring with a Neighbour, advantage their Souls as we might and ought? Can we say that we have been as diligent in our Callings, as watchful and exemplary in our Conversations, as thankful for our Mercies, as fruitful under the Ordinances of God, and as faithful in the improvement of our Talents as we are commanded to be? Do we every day pray and read Scripture in our Closets and Families with

with that holy reverence, humility, faith, seriousness and integrity which God requireth? Do not worldly concerns now and then contend with, and justle out the Worship of the Great God, at least cause us to slip our Prayers, and adjourn the Scriptures reading till a more convenient season? Are we every week-day laborious in our Callings out of Conscience to Gods Precept, and not out of a principle of Covetousness? Do we spend the greatest part of the day therein, without diversions, by vain Companions, or needless Recreations? Are our Affections in Heaven, and our Hearts above, while our Actions are earthly, and our Hands are busie here below. And do we deal in all things with others, as we would in the Judgment of sound reason that others should deal with us, *Matth.* 5.12. Is our daily carriage towards our Relations sober, pious, affectionate, exemplary, and in all things as becomes the Gospel of Christ? O how many are our Omissions, and what millions of them are we guilty of, and therefore they call aloud upon us to mourn for them?

Others

Others are in Hell, and must weep for ever for them; where their Sighs and Sobs, and Prayers and Tears, will no way advantage them. Blessed be God it is not so with us; though their Tears will prove their Hell, our Tears, through the blood of Christ, may prove our Heaven. *Nehemiah*, in the day of his solemn Humiliation with the *Jews*, acknowledgeth and bewaileth their Omissions, their not hearkening to his Commands, and their not minding the Wonders that he wrought for them, *Neh.* 9. 16, 17. So *Daniel*, when he fasted and pray'd, and confessed his sins, and the sins of his people, bewails their Omissions, *Dan.* 9. 6. *We have not hearkened unto thy Servants the Prophets which spake in thy Name, to our Kings, and Princes, and Fathers, and to all the people of the Land*, vers. 10. *We have not obeyed the Voice of the Lord our God, to walk in the Laws which he set before us, by his Servants the Prophets*, vers. 13. *All this evil is come upon us, yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God.* What then? why, he judgeth himself and his people for these sins, and justifieth God in all his

his severity. *O Lord, Righteousness belongs to thee, but to us confusion of face, as at this day, to the men of* Juda *and inhabitants of* Jerusalem, *vers.* 7. So again, *O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face: to our Kings, to our Princes, to our Fathers, because we have sinned against thee*, vers. 8. Omissions must be lamented in this or the other World; we must all be ashamed of them here or hereafter; and is it not much better to bewail them here, than to bewail them in Hell; to judge and condemn our selves for them, than to be judged and condemned by God for them at the Great Day. Ah, at what a cheap rate may a Christian, by Repentance, prevent that blow that will separate him and all his happiness, and bring him to that Repentance which will ever be repented of, but all to no purpose! Oh it's good to be wise on this side another World.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

Use of Trial, whether we be guilty of these Omissions or no.

Use 2. THis Doctrine may be useful in the second place by way of Examination or Trial. If Christ will condemn men at the Great Day for sins of Omission, then it concerns us to examine our selves, whether or no we are of the number of them that shall be condemned for them at that day. *Reader*, it will not be amiss for thee to retire out of the crowd of the World into thy Chamber, and there to commune with thine own heart concerning thy present Condition, and how thou art like to fare for the future; nay, it is of infinite weight and concernment, and may be as much worth as thy Soul and eternal Salvation. How many prove Bankrupts, and are quite undone for this World, for want of a timely casting up their accounts. If they had cast up their accounts before, and perceived how far they had ran behind-hand, they might

might have retrenched their Expences, and advised and consulted some way to have prevented their utter destruction; but they neglected to cast up their accounts, till their accounts cast them up, and it was too late to think of recalling what was past, or remedying what was amiss. Thus many that are Professors, or Christians in title, deal with their own Souls, and defer the trial of their estates till it be too late to amend any thing amiss. If they would now in their health and strength search and try their hearts and ways, if they found things ill, they would have advantages and opportunities through the help of Christ to make them better: *They might seek the Lord while he would be found, and call upon him while he is near.* They might sue and seek to Christ for Eye-salve, that they might see the things of their Peace; for Raiment to hide their Nakedness, that it might not appear to their everlasting shame; and for Gold to enrich them for ever, to make them more worth than both Worlds: If upon a faithful trial, they found things well, it would rejoyce their hearts, encourage

them in ways of holiness, and confirm them against Satans Temptations to dispair. But men generally neglect their Examinations, till God comes to examine them (as the Rulers commanded *Paul* to be examined) with scourgings and scorpions. They presume all is well, hope the best, and would be sorry any should question their estates, and thus persist in their self-deceits, till they come to appear before God, that the gate of Mercy be shut, and the golden Scepter of Grace be wholly withdrawn, and their estates become as desperate as the estates of the Devils.

To urge this Use a little, *Reader*, consider these two particulars:

1. Consider of what weight it is, and how much depends upon this question. Am I of the number of them that shall be condemned for sins of Omission or not? Or am I guilty of Omissions, so as to be banished the presence of Christ for them or not? I tell thee, thy eternal Joy or Sorrow, Happiness or Misery, Pleasure or Pain depends on it. Do but read and consider, and then say whether it be not of infinite weight; *Come*

ye

ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the World. For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink, &c. On the other side, *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink*, &c. Friend, are not these weighty things that depend on the performance or neglect of these positive Precepts? *Come ye blessed of my Father.* Is not a coming (close, near, intimate, familiar, into his very bosom and dearest embraces,) to Christ a weighty thing? To come to Christ here is so weighty, that he came to men into this World to call them to him, *Matth.* 11. 28. *Matth.* 9. 13. But to come to Christ there in all his Robes, and Riches, and Royalty, in all his Beauty, and Glory, and Magnificence, will questionless be of more concern to the Soul. On the contrary, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Is there not weight, *Reader*, in these words? Dost thou know what it is to bid Christ farewel, farewel for

ever, to take an eternal leave of all good? Canst thou bear the extremity of our Culinary fires for a day? Canst thou dwell in everlasting burnings, or abide unquenchable flames? Thou seest all this depends upon thy performing or neglect of the Divine positive Precepts. Doth it not concern thee in a matter of such weight to be faithful in the trial of thy self? Friend, are Life and Death? are eternal Life and eternal Death indifferent things, or things of small moment? Are an eternal enjoyment of God, or an endless separation from God mean or trivial things? Oh how infinitely do they exceed and over-ballance thy understanding! How short must thou of necessity come of conceiving of these things according to their weight? Alas, Friend, what pitiful toys and trifles are Houses, and Lands, and Friends, and Relations, and Honors, and Preferments, I, and Liberty, and this temporal Life, to an eternal happy Life.

2. Consider all are guilty of Omissions, even the Good as well as the Bad, and therefore the more faithfulness, and prudence, and caution is requisite, lest we

we miſtake. If Saints and Sinners are both guilty of Omiſſions, how ſhall I know whether my Omiſſions are ſuch as will conſiſt with Salvation, unleſs I try and examine my ſelf. The good man being guilty of Omiſſions, may fear the dreadful Sentence of, *Go ye curſed*, &c. And the wicked man knowing that the beſt are guilty of many Omiſſions, as well as he may preſume upon the joyful Sentence, *Come thou bleſſed of my Father*, &c. How ſhall each be rectified in his miſtake, and ſatisfied in the truth, but by an impartial and through examination of himſelf? God hath given us a Teſt, which is the word of Truth, *Eph.* 1. 13. whereby we may try our ſelves, and prevent all miſtakes. Where there is a poſſibility of a miſtake in a buſineſs of ſuch infinite weight, there is ſufficient ground for a ſerious trial; but where there is ſo great a probability of miſtaking, as a thing that is ſo eaſie and ordinary (becauſe all men are guilty too much of Omiſſions) there is a neceſſity of a faithful and impartial trial. There is that maketh himſelf rich, (in Temporals he is worth thouſands, in

Spirituals he is rich towards God, and worth millions,) yet hath nothing, (*Orig.* yet *nothing*, in him or to him he is nothing, he hath nothing for all his brags,) there is that makes himself poor, (speaks himself poor, would have others think him poor,) yet hath great riches, (*Hebr.* yet much substance; the man hath a great Estate, but is willing to conceal it. Merchants, who are worth thousands, do not publish or boast of their Wares or Wealth about the City; those poor Creatures do it, who carry all their worth on their Heads, or in their Arms.) *Junius* reads the words well, *Est qui divitem se jactat quum desint omnia, item qui pauperem se fingit cui substantia ampla.* There is that boasts himself rich, to whom all things are wanting; and that feigns himself poor, yet hath large substance. There is that boasts and brags himself rich in the fear and favour of God, and will tell you of his communion and converses with the Divine Majesty, of his love to, and delight in the Ways, and People, and Ordinances of God; when all these things are wanting to him, he hath

hath nothing at all in reality of any of them. There is that fains himself poor, that dissembles (as it were) his estate, that is a Beggar (as some read the word *Poor* here) in his own account, and would have all others judge him so too; he is so covetous after more, that he over-looks what he hath; and so greedy of further attainments, that he takes little notice of his present spiritual enjoyments. If you will believe him, he is a meer Beggar, hath not one bit of bread to eat, and if his Father (*in whose house there is bread enough and to spare*) do not pity and relieve his prodigal Child, he shall perish for hunger; yet this man hath much substance, is a man of worth and wealth indeed. He is like a branch mightily laden with fruit, and an ear fully laden with corn, which the heavier they are laden, the more they bow down to the ground. A meer titular Christian, like an empty Vessel, may make a great sound, but the full Vessel, that contains the precious Liquor, is silent.

I come now to the marks whereby men may know their estates. And for that end I shall lay down several Propositions.

1. *Propoſition.* Thoſe that live in Commiſſions as well as Omiſſions, muſt certainly be condemned at the Great Day. Theſe bid open defiance to the Prohibitions, Precepts, and Penalty of the Law, and dare the Law to do its worſt. Either theſe muſt be condemned, or all ſhall be ſaved. But God is of an holier Nature than to dwell with ſuch Sinners. They may read their doom written under his own hand, and like the Law of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, *That cannot be alter'd*; 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. *Epheſ.* 5. 5. *Rom.* 8. 5. *To be carnally minded is death*, verſ. 13. *If ye live after the fleſh ye ſhall die.*

2. *Propoſition.* They who are guilty of total external Omiſſions, are in a damnable Condition. This is written in broad Letters, that he who runs may read it. They who pray not are under wrath, and the effuſions of wrath, *Jer.* 10. *ult.* They who neglect to pay their external Allegiance to the true God, and deny him his outward Homage and Acknowledgment, ſhall be denied and diſowned by Chriſt, before his Father, and before his holy Angels. The Holy God doth all along ſpeak of theſe as Hea-

Heathens, *Pſal.* 79. 6. and Sinners with a witneſs, *Pſal.* 36. 1, 2, 3. and threatneth that Chriſt ſhall come in flaming fire, to render Vengeance on them, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 7, 8, 9, 10. Thoſe who are guilty of theſe total Omiſſions, in regard of the matter of the Duties commanded them, are ungodly in the higheſt degree, (for ungodlineſs ſtrictly and properly ſpeaks the neglect of our Duties to God, and ſins againſt the firſt Table, as unrighteouſneſs the neglect of our Duties to our Neighbour, and our Tranſgreſſions againſt the Second Table,) and ſo none in the whole Scripture more obnoxious to wrath and ruine, *Pſal.* 73. 12. Theſe are the Ungodly who proſper in the World, but mark how ſoon they periſh, *verſ.* 18. *Thou caſteſt them down to deſtruction, and utterly conſumeſt them with terrours*; 2 *Pet.* 3. 7. *Jude*, *verſ.* 4. & 15.

3. *Propoſition.* Thoſe who perform external Duties, and wholly neglect internal, or pleaſe themſelves in total inward Omiſſions, cannot be in a ſtate of Salvation. God will not be put off with the Body, without the Soul of

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Religion. Indeed, external Duties are but the Garments or Cloaths of Religion, wherein it appears, and whereby it is known to the World; the life and power of it consists in internal Performances, or those that are the motions and actions of the Understanding, and Will, and Affections, as in the Knowledg of God, his Being and Excellency, and the kindness he hath for, and the love he hath to Mankind in Jesus Christ; as also in the choosing him for our richest Treasure, and supream Lord and Law-giver, and in loving him with all the heart, and Soul, and strength, and desiring his love above all the World, and delighting in his Favour, as the Souls felicity, and seeking to please him, rather than to command the Creation. A man without these is but the Picture of a Saint; he hath somewhat of the resemblance, but nothing of the reality of a Christian: He hath a form, but nothing of the power of godliness, (2 *Tim.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, *to* 7.) and therefore is in a state of perdition. The neglect of believing, repenting, loving the Lord Jesus Christ, are all inward Omissions, (for these are acts

acts proper and peculiar to the Soul) and condemned in Scripture with the moſt dreadful damnation, *Mark* 16. 16. *John* 3. *ult. Luke* 13. 3. 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. If a man pray, and pray wholly without Faith, and without fervency, *Jam.* 1. *Jam.* 5. this is no way acceptable to God. All ſuch prayers are howlings and bablings, and of no ſweet ſound in Gods Ears, *Hoſ.* 7. *Iſa.* 1. 15, 16, 17. Whatſoever a man doth either by way of hearing, or ſinging, or praying, or receiving, if there be not that dread of God, and love to his Name, and Faith in Chriſt, which are the eſſentials of theſe Duties, all is as nothing.

4. *Propoſition.* Thoſe who allow themſelves in partial Omiſſions, whether external or internal, are in no good Condition. By partial Omiſſions, I mean at ſometimes, as for prayer; a man, it may be, prays in his Cloſet or Family uſually, but if any worldly buſineſs intervene and calls for his company, he will as uſually attend on that, and wholly omit his Cloſet and Family-Duties for that Morning or Evening. Or for a man to pray, as ſome do only at the Evening, and

and not in the Morning; as if God were the God of the Night, and not of the Day; or as some others, who will pray only upon the Lords-Day, as if God had a right to them then, but not all the week after. Or when men perform some religious Duties, and not others, will pray, but not read Scripture daily; or pray, and read the Word, but not take notice of those under their Roofs, to instruct, and admonish, and support them, as occasion is. Or some will perform their Duties which immediately concern God, but will not be charitable to the Poor, at least not in such a degree and measure as their Estates will bear, and as God expects. These, and such like, I understand by partial and external Omissions. What is meant by internal partial Omission is next to be consider'd. Partial internal Omissions, are, when men oftentimes, though not constantly, are negligent in the manner of performing their Duties; and though they be formal, and superficial, and lazy, and slothful in the Worship of God; yet they take little or no notice thereof. Indeed, sometimes they find some heat

and

and warmth, and this pleaseth them, but at other times they are cold and liveless in their Duties, and this doth not much displease them. They can commonly pray as if they pray'd not, and read as if they read not, and wait on God without any suitable and considerable affections towards him, and not be disturbed at it. These sudden heats at one time, and colds at another time, speak (the Body out of order, and) the Soul not healthy. The next thing to be explain'd, is, what is meant by allowing themselves in partial Omissions, and indeed the stress of the Proposition depends on that. To allow themselves in these partial Omissions notes these two things: To know these partial Omissions to be sins, and yet to continue in them without any great disturbance or trouble of Spirit. They must know that they are sins, otherwise continuance in them will not argue a total want of Grace, or the predominant power of sensuality in the Soul. I doubt not, but in many dark places of this Nation, there may be those who live in a total Omission of some Duties, as praying with their

their Families, and a strict sanctification of the Sabbath; or who yet fear God in truth, and make great Conscience of their Conversations. These men neglect prayer, and devoting the Sabbath wholly to God, *&c.* because they do not know them to be their Duties. And where a man desires and endeavours to know his Masters Will, and lives up to that Light God hath given him, he may upon a general repentance expect pardon through the blood of Christ for sins of Ignorance. But those who live under the clear and plain, and full discovery of the Gospel, must know that these Omissions are sins. Their Ministers are not so ignorant, or unfaithful, as to leave them in the dark about such necessary Duties. *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin,* James 4. ult. The second thing in this allowance, is, to continue in these Omissions, though we know them to be Sins, and to be little or nothing troubled for them. And, I say, those who do so, are in no good Condition, they shall be condemned at the Great Day. And my reasons are partly be-

because its proper to a wicked man to continue in sins. A sheep may fall into the Ditch and defile himself, but he hastens out of it as soon as he can; but the Swine chooseth a dirty place, walloweth all the day long in the mud and mire. A Saint may fall into sin, but he hasteneth to recover himself by repentance. A Sinner lives in it day and night, *Prov.* 4. 17. It's their Food in the day, and their refreshment in the night: *Their sleep departeth from them, unless they cause some to fall.* Hence we read, That sin is their Way, or Work, or Conversation, *Isa.* 55. 7. Partly because allowance of any sin is inconsistent with Grace. Sin and Grace are contrary each to other; and therefore though they may be, and are in the same Subject, yet they are not, they cannot be there together, but as Enemies seeking the destruction one of another. *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against Flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other.* Fire and Water are not more contrary than Vice and Grace, so that he who suffers Vice without opposition, declares plainly that he hath no Grace,

Grace, for these Enemies never meet but they fight. Therefore, *Reader*, examine thy self, thou hast laid down the Commission of Evil, but hast thou taken up every known Duty? Thy Reason will tell thee he is a bad Husband who drains his ground, and then neither soweth nor planteth it. It's all one as if it had continued under water; as good be undrain'd, as unimproved when drain'd.

CHAP. XXXIII.

A Caution against sins of Omission, in regard of the matter of Duties.

Ex. IF Christ will condemn men at the Great Day for sins of Omission: It may exhort us to mind the doing of Good, as well as the forbearing of Evil, to be as watchful against sins of Omission as well as against sins of Commission, and make Conscience of Affirmative as well as Negative Commands. Do not think it sufficient to forbear what is Evil, unless also thou dost what is Good. It's good not to be evil in doing

doing what the Law forbids, but it's evil also not to be good in doing what the Law enjoyns. The Minister is not a good Minister, because he doth not seduce, or mislead, or deceive his people, by false Doctrine, or scandalous living, if he do not teach them the right ways of the Lord, and be not instant with them in season and out of season, to Know, and Adore, and Honour their Maker and Redeemer. A good Shepheard must look to good Pastures for his Sheep, as well as defend them from Lions and Wolves. *Paul* proves his Integrity by this, *That he kept nothing back that was profitable for his people, but taught them publickly, and from house to house, and that he declared unto them the whole Counsel of God*, Act. 20. 21, 22, 27. The Magistrate is not a good Magistrate, who can only say that he never oppressed or persecuted the Innocent. He must be able to say with *Job*, that he relieved them in their Necessities, and redressed them in their Grievances: *I delivered the Poor that cryed, and the Fatherless, and him that had none to help. I was eyes to the Blind, and feet to the Lame.*

I brake the jaws of the Wicked, and pluckt the spoil out of his Teeth, Job 29.12,15, 17. The Christian is not a good Christian, that can only tell us that he is an harmless man, he doth no mischief, he wrongs none in thought, word, or deed. The barren Tree brings forth no bad fruit, yet it's cut down for the fire. He is an evil man that neglects what is good, as well as he that follows what is evil.

Ezek. 18. 31. Therefore, *Reader, Cease to do evil,* (but let not that suffice) *learn to do well,* Isa. 1. Remember to watch against what is evil; *But also to do good, and to distribute, forget not: for with such Sacrifice God is well pleased,* Heb. 13.16. To do good, and to pray in thy Closet and Family, and to read the Scriptures, and to instruct thy Children and Servants, and to sanctifie the Lords-Day, and to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Afflictions; *forget not, for with such Sacrifice God is well pleased. Forsake the foolish,* (this is well, but not enough, and) *walk in the way of Understanding.*

2 Cor. 7.1.

The Law of God must be kept tenderly,

derly, as the very apple of our eyes, *Prov.* 7. 2. The ſmalleſt duſt will offend the eye, and the ſmalleſt Omiſſion will offend the Law. If thy Conſcience be diſpenſatory, it is unholy. Friend, thou haſt largely heard how far ſhort a Negative Religion will bring thee of Heaven, and canſt thou content thy ſelf a moment therewith? Nay, thou haſt heard that for all that thou ſhalt be ſent to Hell, and wilt thou reſt one day or night therein? O Friend, be wiſe in time, and mind poſitive godlineſs, whilſt thou haſt opportunity.

In theſe days of the Goſpel, God is quick and ſpeedy, ſharp and ſevere with men that are barren and unfruitful. *Behold now*, ſaith the Baptiſt, *the Ax is laid to the root of the Tree.* Behold, Conſider, now at this time, when the Redeemer is coming, whoſe way I am preparing; *Now the Ax is laid to the root of the Tree*, Matth. 3. 10. He is now laying aſide his Basket, and taking up the Ax; yea, he lays his Ax at the root of the Tree, as one taking aim where to ſtrike, and how to fell the Tree with the greateſt advantage; therefore it con-

cerns thee to be fruitful. Again, the Apoſtle tells us, That former times of groſs darkneſs were over-lookt by God, but now ſaith he, Now his Son is come into the World, and he reveals his Mercy and our Duty ſo fully and clearly; *Now he commands men every where to repent*, Act. 17. 29, 30. Now he exhorts fruits meet for Repentance, or he will not wink at your Diſobedience, but judge you to Hell flames. And believe it, the Valley of Viſion will prove the heavieſt burden, and the higheſt means will caſt thy Soul into the loweſt miſery. Opportunities of doing good to our own and others Souls, are choice Mercies. They are Talents that muſt one day be reckoned for: Therefore ſaith the bleſſed Redeemer in the juſtification of *Mary* about the Oyntment; *Me ye have not always*; the poor ye have always, and may do them good when ye will; *but me ye have not always. Mary* did well to improve the ſeaſon ſhe had in her hand, as knowing if once loſt, it was loſt for ever.

The Apoſtle *Paul* upon this account adviſeth the *Galathians*, *While ye have time*,

time, do good to all, Gal. 6. 10. Nothing more ſads and dulls the heart, when one comes to die, ſaith a Divine now with God, than his neglect of ſuch opportunities which God's Providence, or his own Place, have put into his hands of doing or receiving good. Nor is there a ſharper Corroſive than the reflection upon thoſe days and times that have paſſed over him, *Male aliud nihil agentem.* Ah how ſad and uncomfortable will it be for thy time to be gone, when thy work is not done! when thy Sun is ſetting, and the ſhadows of the Evening are ſtretching themſelves upon thee, for Conſcience to give thee this ſalute, Thy day is paſſed, thy time is waſted, the buſineſs of life is neglected, and now thine Errors can never, never be amended. Ah what a dreadful hour will a dying-hour be to thee, when Conſcience ſhall plead againſt thee with Whips, and Scorpions, and Flames, and not the deareſt Friend or Relation thou haſt be admitted to plead for thee, or be able to comfort thee! But if the day of death will be ſo uncomfortable, how terrible will the Day of

Eſſex herſe, p. 19.

Judgment be? Then it is that the Saint shall reap the benefit of all the good he hath done, and the Sinner shall reap the mischief of all the good he hath omitted, or left undone. Then the idle Servant that did not trade with his Talent, will be found an evil Servant, and as such condemned to the *Worm that never dieth, and the Fire that never goeth out*, Mat. 25. Then the unfruitful Factor will be found an unfaithful Factor, and as such disown'd and condemned by his Lord.

Reader, believe it, though thou mayst live by a Negative Religion, yet thou canst not die by it, much less stand before the Judgment-Seat of Christ with it. It's true, even such a Religion is of high price with men, but if alone it's abomination in the sight of God. *Reader*, let me reason the case with thee; In other things all are for fruitfulness in what is good: The Husbandman would have his ground fruitful in good Corn, as well as empty of weeds. He would have his Cattel labour, and do him service, and thinks it not enough that they are in the stable or fields and do him no hurt. The Master would have his Servant

vant induſtrious in his Shop or Field, or ſome way or other about his buſineſs, and is not pleaſed to ſee him ſit ſtill all day, and forbear to purloin his Goods, or fight with his fellow Servants. The Father who ſends his Child to School, would have him learn the Languages, and profit daily therein, and without this will not be ſatisfied to hear that his Child ſits ſtill all day at School, learns no Oaths or Blaſphemies, calls no Names, abuſes none of his Companions. And, *Reader*, why ſhould God be contented with thy harmleſneſs, when thou art barren and unprofitable? Hath not God as much right to thee as thou haſt to thy Ground or Cattel? and art not thou as much bound to God as thy Servant or Child is bound to thee? and why then ſhouldſt thou think to put God off with that in thy ſelf, which thou wilt not be put off with in thy ground, or Cattel, or Servant, or Child? Beſides, I muſt tell thee thou art not harmleſs, if thou doſt no good, though thou liveſt not in the Commiſſion of groſs Evils. The Tree in the Garden that brings not forth good fruit is hurtful, though it bring not

forth evil fruit, partly because it cumbers the ground, and takes up room to no purpose; partly because it draws the moisture of the earth to it, and so hinders the thriving of those Trees that are near it, who, but for them, would be more fruitful. So if thou neglectest what is good, though thou dost no open scandalous evil, thou art mischievous and hurtful in the place where thou livest. Thou takest up the room of a Member that might be serviceable to God and his Country. If thou wert gone, there might be one in thy House, Place, Lodging, kept and maintain'd by the Great House-keeper of the World, with the same Mercies with which thou livest, that should adorn the Gospel, glorifie the Name of God, and edifie the Souls of others; and dost thou no harm then by hindring such a one? Is not the Drone hurtful, which idleth all the day, and lives upon the Bees labour, and forceth them sometimes to want, because of her Theft? Is not the Wem in the Body hurtful, when it serves to no use; yet sucks away the nourishment from other parts of the Body. Doth not that

Factor

Factor wrong the Master who imploys him, if he let his stock lie still, though he do not waste it in Riotousness, and Drunkenness, and Filthiness, when the Master might have had one in his place who would have traded with it; and (probably) have improved it to his great advantage? Did ever any Merchant trust a Servant with a stock to lie by him? Nay, is Nature it self content with the removal of what is oppressive? doth it not long and breath after what is perfective? Is not the presence of *malum*, what is evil, a burden? So the absence of *bonum*, what is good, occasion of complaint? There is ingrafted within us not only *Bados*, a depth of distast against feared Evils; but also *Hiatus*, large desires after known Good. As Nature, much more doth Religion call men off what is bad, and provoke men to what is right, and just, and good.

Reader, let me come up a little closer to thee; What is it that I am advising thee to? Is it any thing that is evil? If it be, reject and renounce it. Is it not to be good, and to do good? I will tell thee what I would desire of thee, and then do

do thou judge whether I advise thee as a Friend, or whether my Counsel be worth hearkning to or no?

1. Take heed of external Omissions. If thou hast been faulty herein, I would advise thee every day to mind Prayer, Scripture, watchfulness over thy Heart, Tongue, and Actions, diligence in thy Calling, faithfulness in thy Relations, and to do good to others as thou hast opportunity. Hereby thou wilt acknowledge thy dependance on, and subsistance by the blessed God, to whom thou art bound by millions of Obligations: Hereby thou wilt procure his Protection of thy Person, Provision for thy Family, and Benediction on thy Calling, and all thine Undertakings. And is this ill Counsel, to direct thee to the way how to procure his Favour which can sweeten the bittereſt Condition, and turn the most loathsome Prison into a lovely Palace, and an Hell of misery into an Heaven of Mercy? Friend, do I advise thee for thy hurt, when I advise thee daily to walk and converse with the blessed and glorious God? Is not his Law worth observing, his Glory worth advancing,

cing, and his Service worth minding, and his Love worth accepting, when he can make thee miſerable or happy with a word, in an inſtant; when thou and all thou haſt are in his hand every moment, to be diſpoſed of for Good or Evil, altogether at his Pleaſure, when he can with the breath of his Noſtrils, with the blaſt of his Lips, with a glance of his Eye, ſend thee to Hell, *where the Worm never dieth, and the Fire never goeth out?* Friend, conſider it, Is it not good advice to wiſh thee to ſue and ſeek to him, to pray to and pleaſe him, upon whom thine unchangeable Felicity or Miſery dependeth, and who ſhall judge thee to thine everlaſting ſtate of Life or Death? Is it not good to have the King thy Friend? how many Pleaſures may he do thee? and how many Favours may he beſtow on thee? But how much better is it to have the King of Kings thy Friend? What Pleaſure is there which he cannot do thee? what Favour which he cannot beſtow on thee? He can give thee Earth, Heaven, Riches, Honours, Pleaſures, Life, Health, Food, Raiment, Friends, Relations, his Day, his Word, his

his Ordinances, his Love, his Image, his Peace, his Joy, his Spirit, his Son, Himſelf, every Good, any Good, all Good. O how bleſſed is he that hath this God! But, *Reader*, wouldſt thou have all theſe without ſo much as aſking for them? We ſay, they are poor Favours that are not worth aſking. Sure I am, theſe Mercies are of more value than thine Underſtanding can conceive; and therefore muſt deſerve more Prayers, and Tears, and Groans for them than thou art capable of giving. Do not any day, upon any pretence, omit to offer up thy Morning and Evening Sacrifices. Remember, ſo often as thou neglecteſt Morning-Prayer, ſo often thou art all the day naked, deſtitute of thy ſpiritual Guard, and expoſed to all manner of Evils and Enemies, and doſt fore-ſpeak thy ſelf an evil Day; and ſo often as thou omitteſt Evening-Prayer, thou preſumeſt upon ſleep, and reſt, and ſafety, without God's leave, and fore-ſpeakeſt thy ſelf an evil Night? What did *Thomas* loſe by one Omiſſion. Jeſus appeared the firſt day of the week to his Diſciples, *but Thomas*, ſaith the Text, *was not*

not there, Joh. 20. 24. But what is the iſſue of this Omiſſion? truly, by his neglecting this opportunity of confirming his Faith, he falls into a deſperate fit of Unbelief. When the Apoſtles told him, *That they had ſeen the Lord*, He preſently anſwers, *Except I ſhall ſee in his hands the print of the Nails, and put my finger into the print of the Nails, and thruſt my hand into his ſide, I will not believe*, Joh. 20. 24, 25. Ah what had become of *Thomas*, if infinite Majeſty had not ſtooped to recover him!

2. Take heed of internal Omiſſions. In the next place I adviſe thee to look ſeriouſly to the manner of thy performances, to be ſure that thou worſhip God with thy Heart and Affections. This is the chief, and ſubſtance, and heart of thy Performances, according to which they ſhall be accepted or not. In all thy Addreſſes draw nigh to God with an humble Faith and Confidence, as to a Father, ready, able, and willing to ſupply all thy wants, and anſwer all thy Doubts, and to grant all thy Prayers and Deſires; as alſo with a chearful reverence and awfulneſs, as to a God infinite

nite in his Being, and in all his Perfections, between whom and thee a poor worm there is an infinite distance. In every Duty, Let thy Faith in Christ, thy Love to God, and thy Repentance from dead Works be exercised. Hereby thy Duties will be more comfortable to thy self. Men that perform Duties in a round, out of custom, or for fashion-sake, have no pleasure therein, are backward to them, untoward at them, and careless after them. They come to them with trouble, as to that to which their hearts have a reluctancy, and go from them with joy, as from that which was burdensome and tedious to them. But when men pray with a sense of their wants, and beg mercy, with hope in the blood of Christ, and have their love and joy acted in their Duties, how sweetly do they come off? nay, how pleasant are they in the very performance of them? Communion with God in them brings peace and comfort indeed. Now, *Reader*, do I advise thee to thy hurt, when I advise thee to the life of a Saint, to the life of an Angel; to a life of love, and joy, and delight in the Father of Mercies,

Mercies, and God of all Conſolations? Is not this Life the Suburbs, the Earneſt, the Firſt-fruits of the life of the Bleſſed, of the life of thoſe heavenly Courtiers, who bathe themſelves without intermiſſion in Springs of Joy, and in Rivers of Pleaſures? And by this care of thine about the manner of performing thy Duties, they will be the more acceptable to God. *He commands the Heart*, Prov. 23. 26. *delights in truth in the inward parts*, Pſal. 51. *and is nigh to them that call upon him in truth*, Pſal. 34. How pleaſing would it be to thee to know thy prayers and readings to be pleaſing to God; *Jer.* 30. 21. *And I will cauſe him to draw near and to approach unto me:* (i. e. with welcome and acceptance,) *for who is this that engageth his heart to approach unto me?* If thou bring thy Heart to a Duty, God will bring his Ear to hear thee.

In the proſecution of this Uſe, I ſhall, firſt, lay down ſome Arguments or Motives to inforce it.

2. Lay down the cauſe of theſe Omiſſions, which are ſo frequent among us.

3. Pre-

3. Prescribe somewhat for the Cure and Remedy thereof.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Arguments against Omissions. The positiveness of our Rule, and of Gods Mercies.

I Begin with the first, *viz.* The Arguments to move us to mind positive Duties.

1. Consider the Law which God hath given us for the Rule of our Lives, is both positive and negative; and therefore our Obedience must be such. What need positive Precepts, but to require positive Practices? Single Prohibitions would have sufficed for a negative Religion. *The Law is holy,* (in its Commands that immediately concern God) *just,* (in what it commands concerning our Neighbours) *and good,* (in what it commands concerning our selves,) *Rom.* 7. 12. Look to the Moral Law, every negative command hath a positive Precept. Take the Prophets all along that speak

ſpeak in the Name of the Lord, and we ſhall find that they ſtill enjoyn Duty, as well as forbid Sin, *Deut.* 12. 29. to the end. *Take heed that thou be not ſnared by following the Nations that are deſtroyed before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, ſaying, How did theſe Nations ſerve their gods? even ſo will I do likewiſe.* Here is Sin forbidden: But mark alſo Duty is commanded, *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it: thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.* Nay, a Copy of this Law both poſitive and negative muſt be written out by the Magiſtrate, that we might obſerve it; and it was alſo written in a Book by *Moſes*, and put into the Ark, as a witneſs againſt the *Iſraelites*, if they ſhould not obſerve it, *Deut.* 31. 24, 25, 26. *Joſhua* ſucceeds *Moſes* in his Charge over the *Jews*, and in his Commands to them both affirmatively and negatively, *Joſhua* 23. 7. *Samuel* follows after and ſpeaks the ſame Language, *Serve the Lord with all your heart, fear him, and ſerve him in truth: And turn ye not aſide, for then ye ſhould go after vain things, which cannot profit or deliver, for they are*

vain, 1 Sam. 12. 20, 21, 24. *David* doth the like, *Depart from evil, and do good*, Psal. 34. 14. *Solomon* writes after his Fathers Copy in the very qualifications of those whom he intreats Mercy for. *If they sin, and afterwards bethink themselves, and turn*, (*i. e.* from their sins,) *and return unto thee with all the Heart, and with all the Soul, then hear thou from Heaven, from thy Dwelling-place*, 2 Chron. 6. 36 to 40. *Isaiah* calls on men not only to forsake their evil ways and evil thoughts, but also to return unto the Lord, *Isa.* 55. 7. *Jeremiah* crieth to his people, *Not to oppress the Stranger, the Fatherless, and the Widows; and also throughly to execute Judgment between a man and his Neighbour*, Jer. 7. 5, 6. So *Ezekiel* and the rest of the Prophets, *Ezek.* 18. 21. Our Saviour in his Exposition of the Law, doth forbid what is Evil, and command what is Good, *Matth.* 5. 43, 44. So *Matth.* 7. *per tot.* The Apostle St. *Paul* commands *Not to be conformed to the World*, there is the Prohibition; *but to be transformed, by the renewing of our mind, proving what is the good, and perfect, and acceptable*

will

will of God, there is the Precept, *Rom.* 12. 1, 2. Again, *Put off the works of Darkneſs, put on the armour of Light. Put off the old man, which is corrupt according to his deceitful luſts. And put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs*, Epheſ. 4. 23, 24. *Lye not one to another, but ſpeak the truth.* The Apoſtle St. *James* tells us, Religion conſiſteth in Negatives and Poſitives alſo, *James* 1.21,22,26,27. So St. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 1.14,15. 1 *Pet.* 2.11,12. St. *Joh.* 3.9, 10. *Jude, verſ.* 21, 22, 23. Thus we ſee through the whole *Bible* the Mind of God, by his Meſſengers, to be Poſitive as well as Negative, and this Mind of his he hath ordained to be the rule of our Hearts and Lives; and what ſhall we anſwer when we ſhall be called to an account for our Diſobedience? To what purpoſe is a Rule, if it be not followed? and to what end is the Penalty denounced againſt the Ungodly, if it be not executed?

This is the Voice of the Law of God, and therefore, *Reader*, either thou muſt betake thy ſelf to practical godlineſs, or elſe diſown the Scriptures for thy rule

and square. Thy Duty must (at least in thy desires and endeavours) carry some proportion to thy standard and rule, or else thy Religion is a meer cypher, and signifieth nothing.

So far as the best come short of the Law they sin, 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. *Sin is a transgression of the Law.* And that because the Law is given to him as a rule of Life, God hath therefore qualified it with the porperties of a Rule: 1. A Rule must be perfect, and not defective, not redundant; *The Law of the Lord is perfect*, Psal. 19. 7. 2. A Rule must be plain, not dark; *All her ways are plain to him that understandeth.* 3. A Rule must be published and known, otherwise it's a snare to intrap men. God hath proclaimed his Law; *The Command is not hidden from thee, nor far off*, Deut. 30. 11. *It's not in Heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us thither, and fetch it thence, that we may hear it, and do it?* Nor beyond the Seas. *But the Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart,* (12, 13, 14, verses,) *that thou mayst do them.* 4. A Rule is that by which men shall be judged, so is this Law, *Joh.* 12. 48.

48. *The Word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge you at the laſt day.*

2. The Mercies of God to thee are poſitive as well as privative; and why ſhould not thy Duty be ſuitable to the Divine Bounty. God is not only a Shield to defend thee from evil in thy Body, in thy Soul, in thy Perſon, in thy Relations; in thine Out-goings and in thine Incomings, by Night and by Day, at all times, and in all places; but he is alſo a Sun to refreſh thee with good, with temporal good, Food, Raiment, Friends, Relations, Sleep, Liberty, Wealth, eſteem in the World, *&c.* With ſpiritual good, with Sabbaths, Scriptures, Sacraments, ſeaſons of Grace, with the tenders of Pardon, and Peace, and Adoption, and eternal Salvation, upon excellent and equitable terms. And what reaſon can we give why our Obedience ſhould not bear a proportion to his Beneficence. *He is a Sun and a Shield, and gives Grace and Glory, and with-holdeth no good things from them that walk uprightly*, Pſal. 84.

Shall God with-hold no good thing from thee, and canſt thou find in thy

heart to deny the doing of any good thing for him? Is his Bounty of ſo large an extent, as to comprehend protection from all Evil, and the fruition of all good? and muſt thy Duty be ſo narrow and ſcanty, as if he did not deſerve ſo much as he requireth? Is it honeſt to receive or buy in by one Meaſure, and to return and ſell out by another? *Divers Weights and divers Meaſures, both of them are abomination to the Lord.*

A Weight and a Weight, a Meaſure and a Meaſure, one to buy with that's large, another to ſell with that is leſs; I only alſude to it. It's abominable for thee to receive of God by the largeſt meaſure, and to return to him by the leaſt. *Reader*, if thou art born of God, and guilty of theſe partial temporary Omiſſions, conſider it ſeriouſly, let ingenuity plead for God. When he firſt wrought upon thy Soul, he did not only tranſlate thee out of the Kingdom of Darkneſs, but alſo bring thee into the Kingdom of his dear Son. He did not only turn thee from Satan, but alſo cauſe thee to return to himſelf. He brought thee out of a ſtate of Wrath, and brought thee into a

ſtate

ſtate of Love and Favour, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. He redeemed thee from thoſe Enemies which had carried thee Captive, Sin, Satan, Death, Hell, *Rom.* 6. 11. *Epheſ.* 2. 3, 4. *Heb.* 2. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9, 10. 1 *Theſſ.* 1. *ult.* But this is not all, he hath alſo *brought thee into the glorious liberty of the Children of God*, 1 Joh. 12. 1 Joh. 3. 1. He hath delivered thee from this preſent evil World, (that its affrightments, its allurements, that all its power and policy ſhall not be able to deſtroy thee,) but this is not all, he hath made thee an Heir of a better World. Of a Child of the Devil, thou art made a Child of God, of a Slave to ſin, a Citizen of *Sion*; nay, he doth not only free thee from damnation, and the curſe of the Law; but alſo give thee the bleſſing of eternal life in and with himſelf among his innumerable Company of Angels, and the Congregation of the Firſt-born. Now, *Reader*, judge whether it be not very diſingenious to receive from God all ſorts of Mercies, and to give to God not half the Duties we owe to him. How canſt thou mete to God one meaſure, and expect from him another? Friend, God doth not

put thee off with half-Happiness; and why shouldst thou put him off with half-Holiness?

CHAP. XXXV.

Arguments against Omissions. Christ purchased positive as well as negative Holiness, and our Priviledges oblige to both.

3. COnsider Christ died to purchase positive as well as negative godliness for men; and wilt thou disappoint him of the Fruits of his Death? Indeed, if it had been possible for him to have bought mans deliverance from sin, without the re-impression of Gods Image on the Soul, he had been but half a Saviour, and made us at the most but half happy: But according to the Apostles phrase, he saves perfectly, or to the utmost, upon all accounts, and in all respects, *Heb.* 7. 25. and in order thereunto, bought man off from sin, and unto the Service of God. He redeems us from sin: *We are redeemed*, saith the Apostle,

Apoſtle, *from our vain Converſation received by tradition from our Fathers. Not with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a Lamb without ſpot and blemiſh,* 1 Pet. 1. 17, 18, 19. He redeems alſo unto his own Service, *Chap.* 3. *verſ.* 18. of the ſame *Epiſtle, He ſuffered, the Juſt for the Unjuſt, to bring us to God.* He died, that we might die to ſin; and he died, that we might live to God. He ſuffered, to bring us off from our curſed loathſome Luſts; and he ſuffered, to bring us to the Fear, and Love, and Service of the bleſſed and glorious Lord. We have both theſe ends of our Saviours Sufferings mention'd in *Tit.* 2. 14. *Who gave himſelf* (his Death is called a *giving himſelf*, becauſe it was voluntary, and a freewill Offering) *for us*, (here is his Paſſion; but what ends had he in his eye? truly both theſe,) *that he might redeem us from all Iniquity*, (make us negatively religious, in freeing us from the bondage of ſin) *and purifie unto himſelf a peculiar people zealous of good works*; i. e. make them poſitively holy. None are purified without poſitive qualifications,

tions, and gracious habits in the Soul. To be purified unto himself, is to be thus qualified for the honour and service of Christ. And to make it more plain, the Apostle tells us, *To purifie unto himself a peculiar people*, (a people that shall disown all other Lords, and all other Work, and shall be his Servants, and do his Work only,) *zealous of good works*. He did not die only to make men good, and to enable men to do good; but also to cause them to do good with heat, and heart, and fervency of Spirit. Nay, it is evident, that to make men positively pious, was the main and principal end of his Passion; and that his delivering us from sin, was only in order to this, to his adorning us with Sanctity. As a man cannot put on new Robes till he hath first put off his old Rags, so a man cannot put on the new man, the beautiful Image of the heavenly, till he hath put off the old man, the abominable Image of the earthly *Adam*, Luke 1. 74, 75. *We are delivered out of the hands of our Enemies, that we should serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives.* He plougheth up the fallow ground

ground of the Heart, and kills the weeds of ſin, in order to the caſting in the ſeed of Grace into the Soul.

Now, *Reader*, conſider, if Chriſt died to purchaſe poſitive Holineſs for thee; what hope canſt thou have of an intereſt in his Death without it? Canſt thou think he bought one for thee without the other, or that thou mayſt be a partial ſharer in his Death? And what wilt thou do without an intereſt in his Sufferings? Except he waſh thee in his blood, thou haſt no part in him; and if thou haſt no part in him, thy part muſt be among Devils and damned Spirits. Again, wilt thou by thy Omiſſions deny and deprive Chriſt of that Service, which he hath bought ſo dearly? Alas, how little is it that thou art able to do for him, when thou doſt all thou canſt! And how much did that coſt him? what pangs and throws did he bear? what rage from men? what wrath from God? how did he wraſtle with the Frowns and Fury, with the Power and Policy of the World and Hell? And after all this, doſt thou grudge him that poor Service, for which he was hungry, and thirſty,

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and weary, and tempted, and betrayed, and crucified? *Whether we live*, saith the Apostle, *we live to the Lord; whether we die, we die to the Lord: whether we live or die, we are the Lords. To this end Jesus died and rose again, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living*, Rom. 14. 7, 8. Thou wouldst take it ill thy self to be denied the Service of that, for which thou hast so dearly paid. O think of it, when thou art guilty of Omissions in the matter or manner of Duties, I now rob Jesus Christ of that which he bought with his most precious blood, and let him see the travail of his Soul upon thee, and be satisfied.

4. Consider the Priviledges thou enjoyest call aloud upon thee to mind positive Holiness, and to do good as well as to forbear evil. I am sure thy Priviledges are positive, and so should thy Piety be. What is the Gospel but a Cabinet of precious Jewels, a River of living water, a Case of the richest and costliest Cordials, a Counterpart of Heavens eternal Court-Rolls, concerning the *Philanthropy*, or kindness of God to Mankind, wherein are all sorts of blessings

blessings for Body and Soul in every condition treasur'd up. The enjoyment of it is a special singular Priviledge, the Ministration of the Spirit, 2 *Cor.* 3. 8, 9. The Ministration of Righteousness far above the Legal Ministration. The *Psalmist* tells us, The Laws God gave to the *Israelites* were a special distinguishing Mercy; *He sheweth his Word unto* Jacob, *his Statutes and his Judgments unto* Israel: *He hath not dealt so with every Nation*; as for his Judgments they have not known them, *Psal.* 147. 19, 20. But his Gospel-Dispensation is an higher and greater Favour. But what doth this Gospel-Priviledge call for? surely positive as well as negative godliness. *The Grace of God* (the Gospel is so called, because it declares it to us, 2 *Tim.* 1. 10. and interests us in it as an Instrument thereof, *Rom.* 1. 16.) *which bringeth Salvation*, (which proclaimeth Life upon holy Conditions) *teacheth us, that denying all ungodliness, and worldly lusts*, (Commissions against the first and second Table, but that is not all,) *we should live righteously, soberly, and godly* (righteously towards men, soberly in rela-

relation to our selves, godly in the Duties that concern God,) *in this present evil world.* The Gospel allows of Omissions no more than the Law, and is so far from indulging men in sin, because it hath mercy for the penitent Sinner, that it addeth stronger Obligations to Obedience, and threatneth more severe condemnation to the Disobedient, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15, 16. *Heb.* 10. Again, the Promises which have in their bowels all the good of Heaven and Earth, all the blessings of this Life and a better, which are as much worth as both worlds, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. which are exceeding great (in their quantity) and precious, (in their quality) 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. and the peculiar portion of Gods own Children, *Heb.* 6. 17. who are the only Heirs of them, and all others strangers to them; and therefore miserable, and in an hopeless and desperate Condition. These Promises are so far from excusing or exempting from these positive Duties, that they engage us the more firmly to them, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *Having therefore, dearly beloved, these Promises,* (that God will be our Father, and we shall be his Children,

dren, *&c. Chap.* 6. *verſ.* 18.) *let us cleanſe our ſelves from all pollutions of Fleſh and Spirit,* (but this is not all) *and perfect holineſs in the fear of God.* The Promiſes do not only bind to Purity, but alſo to Proficiency therein, till we come to perfection; *And perfect holineſs in the fear of God.* The Covenant of Grace, which is a Mine of unſearchable Riches, a Book wherein every leaf, nay every line ſpeaks Love and Life; which contains more mercy in it (even the boundleſs God) than Heaven and Earth are able to contain; this requires poſitive as well as negative holineſs, *Dent.* 26. 17. nay it engageth for both, *Ezek.* 36. 25. *From all your Idols and from all your filthineſs will I cleanſe you:* But more than this, 26, 27, *verſes, I will take away your heart of ſtone, and give you a heart of fleſh. I will put my Spirit into you, and ye ſhall keep my Commandments, and do them.* So that all theſe Priviledges are to no purpoſe, if we be not provoked by them to do good, and perform the Duties which are the Conditions of them. *Reader,* think of it, why ſhould God give thee Precepts, to direct thee about the matter and manner

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of performing thy Duties and Promises, to encourage thee to diligence and faithfulness therein, if thou mayst live in the Omission of them? Surely such infinite cost calls for some great care and conscientiousness in thy Conversation. Might not God by virtue of his Dominion over thee, as grand Proprietor of the Universe, have required this at thine hands? but when he is so gracious as to sue to thee, and to allure thee, and seek to draw thee by such Cords of love, wilt thou stand out and deny him? O blush for shame, that thou hast neglected so long the wooings, and beseechings, and intreaties of such a glorious Gospel, and such precious Promises, and such an inestimable Covenant! The greater the Charge God is at with thee, the greater should be the Service thou dost him. Where the ground is well dunged, and dressed, and watered, and manured, a greater Crop is expected by the Husbandman. I must tell thee, Friend, that thou wilt one day find, *That to whom much is given, of him much will be required*, (Luke 12. 48.) and that God expects Returns answerable to thy Receipts.

ceipts. Do not imagine, as some vainly have done, that the bare enjoyment of these Priviledges will save thee; I must tell thee, and that from Gods own mouth, they will be so far from it, that they will make Hell fire the hotter for thee, and much deepen thine eternal condemnation, *Matth.* 11. 21, 22, 23. *Jer.* 7. 3, 4. *Amend your ways and your doings, and trust not in lying words, saying the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these.* Such Priviledges without positive holiness do but usher men to an hotter Hell.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Arguments against Omissions. We profess our selves Gods Servants, and all our Religion will come to nothing without positive holiness.

5. COnsider you are the professed Servants of God, and will you not do your Masters business? You are baptized *in the Name of the Father, Son,*

and Holy Ghoſt; you own your Baptiſm, by your attendance on God (though but ſometimes) in publick Ordinances. You wear the Livery of Chriſt before the World, and if any aſk you, what you are? you ſay a Chriſtian; or whoſe you are? you ſay you belong to Jeſus Chriſt. And, Friend, will you pretend to be Gods Servant, and neglect his buſineſs? This is but to put a mock and cheat upon him; like him in the Goſpel, who when he was bid go work in the Vineyard, ſaid, *I go, but went not. If I be a Maſter, where is your fear*, Mal. 1. 7. If God be your Maſter, where is your fear of diſpleaſing him, either by neglecting what he enjoyns, or doing what he forbids. True, Servants are not at their own, but at their Maſters pleaſure and diſpoſal, as the Centurions Souldiers, when the Maſter ſaith, *Go, they go*, when he ſaith, *Come, they come*; when he ſaith, *Do this, they do it*, Matth. 8. 9. The Redeemer himſelf, when he took upon him the form of a Servant, and became ſo to his Father, *Phil.* 2. 7. *Iſa.* 53. 10. did not what he himſelf would: *I came not to do mine own will, but the will of*

of him that ſent me, Joh. 6. 38. *And as the Father gave me Commandment, ſo do I*, Joh. 14. 31. And to ſhew his faithfulneſs in that relation, when he came to die, he tells his Father, *I have glorified thee on the Earth, and finiſhed the work thou haſt given me to do*, Joh. 17. Nay, the very irrational and inanimate Creatures are the Servants of God, and as ſuch do him poſitive ſervice. The *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks of the Heavens and the Earth, with the Creatures therein. All are thy Servants, at thy beck and bidding, at thy call and command, *Pſal.* 119. 91, If thou ſpeak to the Sun, it riſeth not; if thou ſpeak again, it will ſtand ſtill; if thou ſpeak a third time, it will move faſter or ſlower, which thou pleaſeſt.

If thou commandeſt the Stars, they will fight in their courſes againſt thine Enemies, and ſerve thee faithfully after their manner, as their Lord of Hoſts.

Nay, thoſe Creatures which ſeem moſt ſtubborn and rebellious, being Gods Servants, are pliable to his pleaſure. *Fire, and Hail, and ſtormy Winds, fulfil his Word*, Pſal. 148. 8.

Reader, what doſt thou think of theſe examples, thou ſeeſt the Higheſt, the Heir of all things, when he became his Servant, did his Will and Work, for thee fulfil'd all righteouſnes, and went about doing good, *Act.* 10. And thou ſeeſt the loweſt Beings, Gods Servants, do not only forbear doing evil, but after their manner, analogically they do good, and poſitively, ſerve God; and wilt thou content thy ſelf with a bare forbearance of what is evil, and be ſhamed by inanimate Creatures, who according to their natures in their places do good. Why doſt thou call thy ſelf a Chriſtian, if thou wilt not follow the pattern of Chriſt? and how canſt thou profeſs thy ſelf Gods Servant, if thou wilt not do him Service? *Know ye not*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *that to whom ye yield your ſelves Servants to obey, his Servants ye are to whom ye obey*, Rom. 6. 16. Either obey God as a Servant ought, or diſown him to be thy Maſter. Can he be ſaid to be thy Servant, who neglects thy work, though he do thee no miſchief? Another mans Servant in this reſpect may as properly be ſaid to be thine; for as he minds

minds not thy business, so he doth thee no prejudice. I must speak plainly to thee; if thou allowest thy self in these Omissions, thy practices give the lye to thy profession, and thou art the Devils Servant, though thou weareſt Gods Livery. I shall end this Head, with commending to thee the counsel of Christ; *You call me Lord and Master, and thou sayest well, for so I am. If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, and gone about doing good, how much more should you my Servant.*

6. Consider all your Religion is nothing, and will come to nothing, if you live in the neglect of Gods positive Will. And will you deny your self once and again in forbearing many things that would delight and gratifie your Flesh, and possibly incur the anger of your prophane Neighbors, for not running with them to the same excess of riot, and then lose all for want of doing what is commanded thee. Wouldst not thou think him a foolish Husbandman, that should take care for the casting out the stones, and plucking up the weeds out of his ground, and then lose all his cost

and pains for want of sowing it with good seed? Would it not vex a Scrivener, after he had taken much pains, and spent much time about a large Deed, or Conveyance, after he had taken great care to write it fair, without any blots, to be forced to write all over again, for his omission of some material passage in it? The Apostle writes to the Elect Lady, 2 *Joh.* 1. 8. *Look to your selves that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.* If he that doth not persevere in well-doing, may deprive himself of all the benefit of his good deeds which he hath already done; what benefit can they expect, who never began to do good? How can their good works follow them to their comfort into the other World, who never did any? Or how can God Register their Prayers, and Watchings, and Fastings, and Weepings for Sin, and acts of Devotion in his Book of Remembrance, who never minded them, *Rev.* 14. 13. *Mal.* 3. 7. Christ tells us, *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according to his Works*, Rev. 22. 12. Now, *Reader*, if

if thou contenteſt thy ſelf in thine Omiſſions, what Works haſt thou for Chriſt to reward? all the reward of a negative Holineſs is but a cooler Hell, and, God knoweth, that is ſmall comfort. Thou haſt no work of Faith, or labour of Love, or patience of Hope, or fervency in Prayer, or breathings and longings after conformity to, and communion with the bleſſed God for Chriſt to Record and Reward. The Holy Ghoſt when he tells us, *That God will render to every man according to his deeds*, preſently ſubjoyns, *To them who by patient continuance in well-doing* (i. e. poſitive Holineſs,) *ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, everlaſting life*, Rom. 2. 6, 7. *Virtutis eſt magis honeſta agere quam non turpia*, as he ſaid well. It's rather the property of Virtue to do things laudable, than not to do things loathſome.

A negative Chriſtian in Gods account is no Chriſtian; and though he may ſtand for ſomewhat among men (that are no better than himſelf) yet he is a meer Cypher in the account of God. God ſeeth that as he is not outwardly

bad, so he is not inwardly good; and that he is at a greater distance from Piety than from Prophaneness, and he looking most to the heart and bent thereof, *Psal.*51.7. 1 *Sam.*15. must needs loath a filthy unclean Conscience under a fair civil Conversation.

A Tree may be full of Vermine, when the green leaves may hide them from the eyes of men. So the vermine of Pride, and Unbelief, and Hypocrisie, may crawl in thy Heart, though thy civility may hide them from the sight or suspicion of thy fellow Creatures. We say, *All is not Gold that glisters*, much less is shining civility sincere sanctity. The *Jews* who obeyed some of Gods Laws, because they lived in the wilful breach of others, are said *to have done nothing of all his Commands*, Jer. 32. 23. *And they came in, and possessed it* (*i. e.* the Land of *Canaan*) *but they obeyed not thy Voice, nor walked in thy Law: They have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them to do.* It seems strange that the Indictment should run so high, as to accuse them of the breach of every Law, and the neglect of every positive Precept?

cept? surely the *Jews* offer'd Sacrifice, circumcised their Children, kept the Passover, observed their new Moons and Sabbaths, and did many things which God commanded them to do; and yet here they are charged to do nothing that God commanded them to do. Truly, because they had not a conscientious eye to every known Duty, but allowed themselves in the Omission of some, God reckons that they obey'd him in none, and deals with them as if they had done nothing of all that he commanded them. Now, *Reader*, if they who perform some positive Duties, are counted by God as performing none, if they wilfully neglect any, what a pitiful nothing will God reckon thy Religion, if it be wholly negative, without any positive Obedience at all. Though brass Coin be not so bad as Leathern, yet not being so good as Silver, it's little accounted. Though thou art not as bad as the scandalous, yet if thou art not as good as the truly pious God will not esteem thee. For what is highly esteemed of men, may be an abomination in the sight of God.

Reader,

Reader, weigh this Argument; wouldſt thou loſe all the pains thou takeſt to forbear what is evil? art thou contented to work all thy days at the Labour-in-vain? Canſt thou be ſatisfied that thy negative Religion ſhould be counted at the Great Day a Nullity, or no Religion at all? Little doſt thou think how deep it will cut thy heart to find thy civility judged by God himſelf to be but varniſhed Heatheniſm, or gliſtering Impiety. The young man who was more than a meer negative Chriſtian, thought his condition ſafe and ſound; but when Chriſt diſcover'd him inſincere, he went away as heavily as he came to him haſtily. Probably thy hopes are great; but I muſt tell thee, thy diſappointment will be the more grievous; when thou ſhalt find thy ſelf deceived, and that thou haſt all thy life long been a labourious Loyterer, and done nothing. The greater riſe thine expectation had, and the higher thy hope was, the more bruiſing will thy fall be, and the heavier thy heart for ever.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Arguments against Omissions. God deserves our positive Obedience before all others; and true Sanctification cannot be without it.

7. CONsider God deserves your positive Obedience as well as your Negative. Friend, if God hath thy negative Obedience, some other hath thy positive, (for I cannot suppose thee idle all the time of thy life) either the Devil, or the World, or the Flesh: Man cannot live without a Master, whose work and business he will do. Now let thy Conscience judge which of these deserves thy Service best. If as *Alexander* said (when asked of his Kingdoms, who should inherit them after his death,) *Let them be given to the most worthy.* Thou wilt for the future give thy Affections and Conversation to the most worthy, I doubt not but thou wilt quickly give them to God. For the Devil, surely thou wilt not for shame put him

him in compoſition with God. Is not he an old Serpent, ſolicitous night and day with his wiles, and ſnares, and devices, to deceive thee? And is not he a roaring Lion, ſeeking continually how he may devour thee? 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. *Eph.* 6. 11. *Rev.* 12. 9. 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. Is not his emnity ſuch againſt God, that he hates thee for his ſake, and improves all his power and policy to bring thee to be a partaker of the ſame miſery and wretchedneſs with himſelf? and is he fit to be thy Maſter? Art thou willing to be his Servant? yet I muſt tell thee, if thou wilfully neglecteſt the work of God, thou art of thy Father the Devil, if the Devil and his works thou doſt, *Joh.* 8.44. And remember, the Redeemer had not died to ſubdue the Devil to us, if it had not been cruel bondage for man to be enſlaved to him, *Heb.* 2.

For the world, what is in it that ſhould deſerve thy ſervice? I am ſure God made the World for thee, and not thee for the World; and the end is more excellent than the means: God made the World to ſerve thee, and not thee to ſerve the World. Is it Riches that thou

payeſt

payeſt thy Homage to? Ah how infinitely inferior are they to thy ſpiritual Soul! Is it not a rare lovely ſight to ſee a noble Heaven-born immortal Spirit truckle, and bow, and ſubmit, and be a drudge and ſlave to white and yellow duſt, to the guts and garbage of the Earth? Is not this a fine ſight thinkſt thou, for thy Love and Deſires, and Joys and Delights, like Moles to be grovelling in the Earth, when high and noble Objects worthy of them are always before thee expecting them?

Or is it the Honour of the World which thou adoreſt? Doſt thou know what an Idol thou haſt ſet up in thine heart? A Vapor, a Wind, the ſtinking breath of a company of ignorant vile people, who underſtand nothing of true worth or excellency. Where is this? or what is this God whom thou worſhippeſt? a faſhion, σχῆμα τῦ κοσμῦ, 1 *Cor.* 7. 31. a mathematical Figure, ſomewhat in ſhew, nothing in ſubſtance, φαντασία, a fancy, *Act.* 25. 23. that hath an exiſtence in the brain, but no where elſe. It's as an eccho to the Ear, which is a voice, a buz, a hum, and no more.

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It's as a Picture to the Eye, which hath ſome ſhape, but no life. In brief, honour of the World is ſo poor, ſo pitiful, ſo inconſiderable a thing, that a wiſe man would not give a farthing for it.

Or is it Pleaſure, that bewitching Bait, that ſugred Poiſon, which hath caught and kill'd many? Thou knoweſt not what thou doſt, when as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Thou ſerveſt divers luſts and pleaſures*, (Tit. 3. 2, 3.) reckoning it as the miſery of man by nature. What is this pleaſure, but the ſatisfaction of thy ſenſes, and the delight thou haſt therein, which the Beaſts may enjoy above thee. Let Conſcience judge, are brutiſh Pleaſures worthy to domineer and bear ſway over a mind that is large enough to graſp both Worlds, and an heart capable of the Joys and Pleaſures of glorious and bleſſed Angels? *Reader*, if the World were worthy to be thy Maſter, or its Treaſures, or Honours, or Pleaſures, did deſerve thy Service, the Redeemer might have ſpared his pains and paſſion, when he gave himſelf to this preſent evil World, *Gal.* 1. 4.

Or is it the Fleſh thou art ſo fond of? why,

why, that's but a poor piece; it's deceitful, and will cozen thee, *Jer.* 17. 9. It hath ſuch a depth of deceit in it, that neither thou nor any other Creature can ſadom it. And is it good to be a Servant to ſo treacherous a Maſter? it's dying, and will forſake thee, *Pſal.* 73. 25. It muſt ſhortly be laid in the duſt, become food for Worms; nay, be turn'd into duſt. And canſt thou think this clod of Clay, this lump of Earth, this ſink of Filthineſs, this receptacle of crawling Vermine, a fit Maſter to rule over a Soul that is of Cœleſtial extraction, of a ſpiritual angelical Nature, and of an eternal duration. Surely, *Reader*, thou art no debtor to the Fleſh, to live after the Fleſh, *Rom.* 8. 12. Thou oweſt thy Fleſh nothing, but care and watchfulneſs to keep it under, and to ſubdue it, that it lord it not over thy Spirit. If thou ſerveſt the Fleſh once, thou ſerveſt it too much by once; for thou art no debtor to it, and doſt not ow it the leaſt Service imaginable, but in ſubordination to thy Soul and Saviour: Surely then, if neither the Devil, nor the World, nor the

the Flesh deserve thy positive Obedience, God must. *Reader*, let me come up a little closer to thee; I pray who hath laid most Obligations on thee, God or they? To whom art thou most indebted to God or to them? Did they give thee thy Being, when thou wast nothing? Did they form thee and fashion thee in thy Mothers Womb? Was it by them that thou wast born? Did they look after thee in thine Infancy, and cause Mercy all along to grow up with thee? Have any of them protected thee in thy Dangers, supported thee in thy Difficulties, supplied thee in thy Wants, or deliver'd thee out of thy Distresses? Who spreads thy Table, and blesseth thy Food to thee every day? Who makes thy Bed, and commandeth sleep for thee every night? Whose mercy is it thou livest, Gods or theirs? and through whose compassion is it that thou art not consumed? Whose visitation is it that preserveth thy Spirit? Who defendeth thee night and day from Devils and damned Spirits, who watch continually to drag thee to their own Den and Dungeon of Darkness;

Darkneſs, and who hath relieved thee with all the Mercies which ever thou haſt enjoyed? and is all this nothing to ingage thee to his Service? Doth all this care of thee deſerve nothing from thee again to God? But, Friend, to come up one ſtep nearer to thee; Did God, or any of them, ſend his only begotten Son to redeem thee out of the hands of the Law and Divine Juſtice, and to purchaſe for thee a ſtate of Peace, and Love, and Adoption, and everlaſting Life? Did they, or any of them, bear the Curſe of the Law, and the Wrath of an infinite Majeſty, and the Rage of the Fiends of Darkneſs, to deliver thee from them, and to make thee bleſſed? O *Reader*, where are thy Wits? what is become of thine Underſtanding? If he that ſends thee in all the good thou enjoyeſt, and freeth thee from all the evil thou eſcapeſt, doth not deſerve all thou haſt and art; who doth I know not. Haſt thou laid the thouſandth part of thoſe Obligations on any Child or Servant thou haſt, which God hath on thee? Didſt thou make them? doſt thou preſerve them? canſt thou redeem them?

Alas, thou art but a poor Instrument in the hand of God, to convey some small matters to them; yet thou expectest positive as well as negative Obedience from them; and why should not God, who hath laid such millions of Obligations on thee, look for the like from thee? Once more, to whom wilt thou call in thy day of Distress? To whom wilt thou cry in thy time of trouble, to God, or any of those three fore-mentioned? Masters, is it to them, or to God that thou wilt lift up thy Hands, and Eyes, and Heart on thy sick, on thy dying Bed, when all thy Friends and Kindred will be insignificant and helpless to thee, and Devils will wait on thee to devour thee? Who is it that offereth thee an unchangeable state of Pleasure and Happiness upon excellent and equitable terms, that intreats, and invites, and wooeth, and courteth thee to accept of freedom from misery, and Hell flames, and eternal damnation; and also to embrace his tenders of fulness of joy, and a Crown of Life, and a Kingdom of Glory for ever and ever? Ah Friend, little dost thou know how much thou

owest

oweſt the bleſſed God. I am ſure thou canſt not deny him any part of thy Heart or Life, if thou wilt give him what he deſerves, thy Conſcience muſt tell thee that it is his due. And then if thou wilt give every one his due, why ſhouldſt thou put by the glorious Lord? If thy Friends, thy Neighbours, thine Enemies, all muſt have their due: I beſeech thee do not deny God, but let him have thy poſitive Obedience, which is unqueſtionably his due.

8. Conſider Sanctification, Repentance, or ſound-ſaving Converſion, conſiſteth in poſitive as well as negative Holineſs; nay, more eſpecially and principally in poſitive Holineſs, as that which conſummateth and perfecteth the work. And how then canſt thou have any grounded hope that thy condition is ſafe without it? When the Prophet mentions that Repentance which is never to be repented of, that Repentance which ſhall find Mercy, and obtain Pardon; he enjoyneth both, *Iſaiah* 55. 7. An averſion from Sin, and a Converſion to God, as their ſupream and chiefeſt good. When the Apoſtle

mentions that Sanctification, which is the inſeparable concomitant of Juſtification, and the conſtant effect of our Union with Chriſt, he mentions both. *Reckon ye alſo your ſelves to be dead unto ſin*, (freed from it Laws, as a dead Wife from the Laws of her Huſband, and diſabled unto its Service, as a dead man is unto the actions of life; here is negative Holineſs,) *but alive unto God*, (obliged unto his Laws, as a living Subject is unto the Laws of his Soveraign, and enabled unto his Service, as a living man is unto actions that are ſuitable to life; here is poſitive Holineſs,) *through Chriſt*. This is the root upon which Sanctification groweth as the fruit, *Rom.* 6. 11. So *verſ.* 18. *Being then made free from Sin, ye became the Servants of Righteouſneſs*. Being deliver'd from the former Uſurper, they became obedient to their rightful Lord, and ſerved him.

Now, Friend, what wilt thou do for an evidence of Repentance and Sanctification, which are of ſuch abſolute neceſſity, that thou canſt not be ſaved without them, *Luke* 13. 3. *Heb.* 12. 14.

If

If thou neglecteſt poſitive godlineſs, indeed thou mayſt flatter thy ſelf with an hypocritical Repentance, but a ſincere one reſpects both parts of the Law. An *Hebrician* obſerves that in the word *Tamim*, which ſignifieth upright or perfect; there is a great *Tau*, to note that an upright man obſerveth, the whole Law, from the firſt to the laſt letter thereof. He may be too critical, but this is certain, the true Penitent chooſeth the way of Obedience, as well as refuſeth the way of Diſobedience. He is deſcribed by this Character, *He chooſeth the things that pleaſe God*, Iſa. 56. 4. He doth not only refuſe the things that diſpleaſe God, but alſo chooſe the things that pleaſe him; yea, and becauſe they pleaſe him. The natural Votary is, what he is, from the good temperament of his body, which makes him more gentle and pliable than otherwiſe he would be. The moral Religioniſt is, what he is, from the improvement, or rather miſimprovement of his natural Reaſon. The Civilian is, what he is, from fear of man, or out of reſpect to man; *He is ſtill in the bond of Iniquity*; but he

is ſo careful to line his Fetters, that they do not clink to the diſturbance of others, or to his own ſhame. But the true Chriſtian is what he is from Conſcience of, and love to the Will of God; and as he at his firſt implantation into Chriſt brings forth this good fruit, ſo he continueth in it to the end of his life. *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit*, Joh. 15. 5.

As Naturaliſts obſerve of the Bees, that they are laborious in their youth, and do not diſpenſe with themſelves to be idle in their age; but as they increaſe in dextrouſneſs, ſo alſo in laborioufneſs, being more early at work than the younger; nay, when their Bodies are over-ſpent, and their wings ragged, they will venture abroad to work, though they often prove too weak to return home. Thus the right Convert flouriſheth as the Palm-Tree in his youth, *and is fat and flouriſhing, and brings forth fruit in his old age*, Pſal. 92. 12, 13, 14.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

If God ſhould omit his care of us a moment, we are undone. And if Chriſt had omitted the leaſt in our Work of Redemption, we had been loſt irrecoverably.

9. COnſider, if God ſhould omit his care of thee, and neglect thee as often as thou omitteſt his Service, and neglecteſt him; nay, if he ſhould withdraw his poſitive Providence from thee one moment, what would become of thee? thy Body would be turn'd into a dead loathſome Carkaſs, and thy Soul would be haled by Devils to Hell fire. Is it not more juſt that God ſhould neglect thee, than that thou ſhouldſt neglect him? and hath he not much more reaſon to neglect thee a moment, than thou haſt to neglect him days, and moneths, and years? He hath no Obligation to thee, thou haſt thouſands to him. All he doth for thee is mercy, meer mercy; not only beyond but contrary to merit: All he requireth of thee,

and all thou canst do for him, is Duty, and that which the greatest Justice calls upon thee for. Now if thou art unwilling to be neglected by God, why shouldst thou not be as unwilling to neglect God? Is thy safety of greater concern than his Glory? or must thy Pleasure be prefer'd before his? Wilt thou not make that golden Rule of Christ the rule of thy actions with men, to deal with them as thou wouldst have them to deal with thee; and wilt thou deal otherwise with the blessed God? Must he remember thee at all times, in all conditions; keep thee night and day, lest any hurt thee, support and supply thee every moment, and thou forget him days without number? Is this fair or honest dealing?

Reader, Let me tell thee, upon him thou livest, by him thou movest, and from him thou hast thy Being. Thou canst not think, or speak, or act in the least, if he should suspend his care of thee; thine Eyes could not see, nor thine Ears hear, nor thy Mouth taste, nor thy Hands or Feet move, if his Providence doth not concur to them. If he

he ſhould but with-draw his manutenency, and the hold he hath of thee for the ſmalleſt pittance of time, thou wouldſt drop into the bottomleſs Pit. The flames do not depend more on the Fire, nor the ſtreams on the Spring of water, than thy Life, and all thy Comforts for this and the other World do upon God; and wilt thou provoke him to leave thee? He hath ſaid, *with the froward he will ſhew himſelf froward*, Pſal. 18. 26. That he will walk contrary to them that walk contrary to him, and that he will forſake them that forſake him, and pay men in their own Coin; and wilt thou venture him any longer? Others have felt the truth of thoſe threatnings, and doſt thou think to go unpuniſhed? Surely if common ingenuity will not move thee to remember him night and day, who remembreth thee with Loving-kindneſs every minute; yet the Divine Severity may fright thee from forgetting him, leſt he forget thee for ever. Believe it, if he leave thee, Wrath, and Death, and Hell, and Damnation, and Devils will ſoon find thee. Thou canſt now depart from him, by thy neglect

Lev. 26. 24.

2 Chron. 15. 2.

If God ſhould omit his care of us a moment, neglect of his Worſhip, and be merry and chearful notwithſtanding; but if once he depart from thee, though but for a moment, thou art undone eternally. *Woe be to thee, when I depart from you*, Hoſ. 9. 12. Thy Friends, and Relations, and Creature-Comforts may depart from thee, and it may be well with thee; but if the Fountain of thy Life, the God of thy Health, the Father of all Mercies depart from thee, woe will be to thee. Heaven and Earth cannot make him bleſſed, or hinder him from being extreamly curſed, whom God leaves and forſakes. Alas, if the Heavens omit to give us its ſhowers, or the Sun omit to diſpenſe its influences, or the Earth omit to yield its increaſe; where are we? what can we do? how lamentable is our condition? Thoſe Perſons that were purer than Snow, that were whiter than Milk, that were more ruddy than Rubies, or than poliſhed Saphires, their Viſage is blacker than a coal: *They are not known in the ſtreets, their Skin cleaveth to their Bones, it is withered, it is become like a ſtick*, Lament. 4. 7, 8. *The Children and the Sucklings ſwoon in the ſtreets*,

ſtreets, Lam. 2. 11, 12. But if our caſe be ſo woful, when Creatures omit their accuſtomed kindneſs to us, what will it be if God ſhould omit his care of us?

10. Conſider, If the Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhould omit the leaſt in the Work of thy Redemption, thou wouldſt be undone for ever. Had Chriſt been as unwilling to ſave thee to the uttermoſt, as thou art to ſerve him to the uttermoſt, what would have become of thee? Friend, Jeſus Chriſt trod the whole Wine-preſs of his Fathers Wrath alone; had he left but one drop of that bitter Cup of Divine Wrath for thee to drink, it would have cauſed thy Belly to ſwell, and Bowels to be troubled, and Bones to ake, and whole Body and Soul to ſuffer extremity of Torments for ever. When Chriſt undertook to interpoſe between thee and his Father, to ſtand as a ſkreen between thy poor Soul and a conſuming Fire, he omitted not the leaſt that was requiſite for thy good. Though it was hard work, painful work, amazing work, ſuch work as neither Men nor Angels durſt undertake; yet when thy Miſeries and Neceſſities required it, he did it.

He

If God ſhould omit his care of us a moment, He did not omit to contend with Earth, and Heaven, and Hell for thee: He did not omit to drink of the Brook in the way, of the Cup of his Fathers Wrath, and to tread the Wine-preſs of his Anger alone, that he might obtain Favour and Life for thee. He omitted not the leaſt in point of ſatisfaction to his Fathers Juſtice, he deſired not the ſmalleſt abatement of thoſe vaſt ſums which thou thou didſt ow to the Divine Majeſty, but paid the utmoſt farthing for thee. He never gave over till all was finiſhed, till all the Tipes were verified, all the Promiſes accompliſhed, and all the Demands of his Father fully anſwered, *Joh.* 19. 28. He omitted nothing in point of application of the Purchaſe which he had bought for Sinners. *As he died to make ſatisfaction for us, ſo he ever liveth to make interceſſion for us.* As he died to make his Will good, (for a Will is not of force as long as the Teſtator liveth, *Heb.* 9. 17.) wherein he gives Pardon, and Love, and Life to his people; ſo he liveth to ſee his Will made good, that his choſen might enjoy whatſoever his boundleſs Love and Grace had

had bequeathed to them. He died, that he might be a legal Teſtator; and he liveth, that he might be his own Executor.

Now, *Reader*, did Chriſt omit nothing which related to thy Salvation, and wilt thou omit any thing that relates to his Service? Did he not ſhrink back when thy Miſeries call'd him to bear that burden which made the Earth to quake, the whole Creation to groan, and would have broke the backs of Angels and Arch-Angels, and all the heavenly Hoſt, if they had put their ſhoulders under it; and wilt thou ſhrink back from that eaſie Yoke and light Burden, which he calls thee to take upon thee? Is this thy kindneſs to thy Friend? *Why doſt thou uſe him thus*, as *Abſalom* ſaid to *Huſhai*. Is this thy gratitude to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, why doſt thou ſerve him ſo? 2 *Sam.* 16. 17.

When the moſt righteous God demanded full ſatiſfaction for the breach of his Law, by the Nature that had tranſgreſſed it, and reſolved, that if he had it not, the whole Poſterity of *Adam* ſhould periſh; when his Wrath

was

was breaking in like a Flood to overwhelm the whole World of Mankind, and neither Man nor Angel durst stand in the breach to divert this deluge of Fury, when the Knife of the Laws Curse was even at the Creatures throat, as *Abraham*'s at the throat of *Isaac*. Thy Redeemer call'd to his Father, O Father, Father, hold thine hand, slay not those poor Creatures; I have provided a Sacrifice, such as thou wilt accept. I know that Beeves, and Goats, and Lambs are not the Sacrifices for Sin which thou wouldst have, (what proportion hath the blood of Beasts to the infinite demerit of Sin) but I know what Sacrifice thou wouldst have; thou wouldst have me to offer my self upon the Cross as a Sacrifice to thy Justice, (that the whole World might know the Holiness of thy Nature, the Righteousness of thy Law, and thine infinite kindness to thine Elect,) *Well, I come to do thy Will, O God.* Though the Task be so great, and the Work so grievous, that no other dares so much as touch it; and though I am wholly free, and none can oblige or compel me to it, yet I will undertake it.

Now,

Now, *Reader*, was Chriſt ſo forward, ſo willing to obey ſuch a Command of dying a curſed, painful, ſhameful death, that he tells his Father, *I delight to do thy Will, O God*; and art thou ſo backward to obey his Commands, and to walk in his ways, *When his ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all his paths are peace*, Pſal. 40. 6. Heb. 10. 5. Prov. 3. 17. Was Chriſt ſo careful and tender of thee, that he would not omit any thing needful for thy good; and art thou ſo careleſs and forgetful of him, as to omit that which is of ſuch concernment to his Glory? Friend, bethink thy ſelf, doth not thy Redeemer deſerve fairer dealings at thy hands? Heathens and Publicans would not be ſo baſe and unworthy to their Friends and Benefactors.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Arguments againſt ſins of Omſſion. The new Nature in Believers inclines them to poſitive as well as negative Holineſs, and the profit will anſwer the pains.

11. COnſider if thou art a Believer, thy predominant new Nature inclines thee to poſitive as well as negative Holineſs. And ſhall this be given thee in vain? ſhall God be at ſuch coſt and charge, as to infuſe a principle of life into thee to no purpoſe? Pray obſerve what end God hath in this regenerating Work. *Of his own Will begat he us again, by the Word of Truth, that we ſhould be a kind of Firſt-Fruits of his Creatures*, Jam. 1. 18. Where we have the cauſes of Regeneration: 1. The efficient Principal, *He*. 2. The moving, *His alone Will*. 3. The formal, *Begat us again*. 4. The inſtrumental, *The Word of Truth*. 5. The final, *That we ſhould be a kind of Firſt-Fruits*. God begets us again, that we ſhould be devoted

voted to him; as the First-Fruits of all the sheaves were consecrated to God, and that out of thankfulness to him, for his innumerable blessings, *Prov.* 3. 9. *Rom.* 12. 1. The First-Fruits were holy to the Lord, and so should all Christians be. Again, he tells us his design in giving a new Spirit, and putting his Spirit into them, *That they may walk in his Statutes, and do them*, Ezek. 36. 26, 27. So that 'tis Sacriledge, and God-robbery for a Christian to imploy himself to the use of any but God, because he is devoted to God; and it's also below a Christian, as for a man to live as doth a Beast; for him that hath a noble Divine Principle to live as other men. As all the Children of the first *Adam* derive from him a depraved Nature, which inclines them not only to omit what is good, but also to do what is evil; therefore his Seed are known by both those signs, *Psal.* 36. 3, 4. *Hos.* 4. 1, 2, 3. So all the Children of the second *Adam* derive from him a renewed Nature, (*For they are made partakers of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4.) which doth not only take them off from what is evil, but

alſo put them forward to that which is good, *Rom.* 6. 11. As the Branches derive from the Root that ſap and moiſture which enableth them to fruitfulneſs; ſo the Chriſtian draweth that Virtue from Chriſt, even in his firſt Converſion, that inclines him whilſt he lives to bring forth fruit to God, *Epheſ.* 2. 10. *We are his Workmanſhip, created in Jeſus Chriſt unto good Works, which God hath ordained that we ſhould walk in them.* Mark, this new piece that is indeed Gods Maſterpiece (for the New Creation doth far excel the old Heavens and Earth,) is formed in Chriſt as the efficient Cauſe unto good Works, unto ſuch Works as flow from the Spirit of God as the Principle, as are according to the Will of God, as the Rule, and for the Glory of God as the end, *Gal.* 5. 20. *Gal.* 6. 16. *Phil.* 1. 11.

Each Convert hath Communion with Chriſt in his Death, and alſo in his Life; He knoweth Chriſt, and hath fellowſhip with him in his Death, whereby he dieth to Sin: Hence he is ſaid *to be dead and buried with Chriſt*, Rom. 6. 6. *knowing this, that our old man* (ſo Sin is

is called, because it's nigh as old as man, is full of subtilty and craft, and should be always decaying and dying,) *is crucified with him*, (*i. e.* Christ, whom Sin crucified, and whose Death crucifieth Sin,) *that the body of sin* (sin is said to have a body, because it consisteth of many members, *Col.* 3. 5.) *might be destroyed*, (for as the life of Sin gave Christ his deaths-wound, so the death of Christ gave Sin its deaths wound,) *that henceforth we should not* (willingly, chearfully, customarily,) *serve sin as our Lord and Master.* And as the Convert hath fellowship with Christ in his Death, so also in his Resurrection. *That I may know him, and the power of his Resurrection*, Phil. 3. 10. *i. e.* Have experience (for 'tis such a knowledge he speaks of) of the power and energy of the Life of Christ, to quicken me unto new Obedience.

Besides, the true Convert hath the Law of God written in his Heart, which cannot but move him to the observation of the Law in his Life, *Psal.* 37. *Heb.* 8. According to the predominant principles that are in every mans nature, such are

his inclinations, whether to God or evil, and such are ordinarily his practices. As a bowl moves this way or that way, according as the Byas inclines.

Now, *Reader*, Consider, either thou art a Believer or not: If thou art not, it concerns thee speedily to look about thee, lest thou die in this estate, and be damned for ever, *Joh.* 3. *ult.* If thou art a Believer, it would be very strange for thee to continue in any Omission, for all this while thou actest against thy nature. It's very much easier to sin with thy nature than against it. A wicked man that hath knowledge, cannot sin with such pleasure and easiness as another, because he doth in sinning oppose and fight with Conscience within him; but it seems harder for thee, for thou dost not only offer violence to thine enlightned Conscience, but also to the new Nature that is implanted in thee. By thy Omissions, thou dost not only sin against thy natural Light, but also against thy new spiritual Life. It's hard, we say, for a man to thwart or cross nature, *Naturam expellas furca*, &c. and wilt thou take such pains to disobey thy Gods

Gods Precepts? The Devils Servants do his Will, but it is with their own whole Wills, according to their own inclinations; they do not croſs themſelves to pleaſe him. But thou canſt not neglect the Will of God, but it muſt be in part againſt thine own will, and againſt thine own inclinations; and wilt thou diſpleaſe thy ſelf to diſpleaſe God, and walk contrary to thy ſelf, that thou mayſt walk contrary to God. This is the part and guiſe of the moſt ſpiteful, envious, and malicious Enemies, and I am ſure it's impoſſible for thee (if a Believer) to be ſuch an enemy to God. God did purpoſely endue thee with a new Spirit, that thou mighteſt live to his praiſe, *Iſa.* 43. 21. *This people have I formed for my ſelf, and* (new made and moulded them) *they ſhall ſhew forth my praiſe.* Now how is the praiſe of God ſpread in the World, but by good Works, *Matth.* 5. 16. *Let your light ſo ſhine before others, that they ſeeing your good works, may glorifie your heavenly Father,* ſo *Joh.* 15. 8.

Again, it would be marvailous if thou ſhouldſt not follow thy own natural

propensity and inclinations. For a dead man to lie still, and not stir, nor perform any actions of life, is nothing strange, none expecteth any other; but for a living man, one that hath a principle of life to do so, would be accounted little less than miraculous. For a man dead in Sins and Trespasses, that hath no Spirit of Grace to enliven his poor Soul, to lie still in his idleness, and slothfulness, and carnal security, and to neglect the performance of the Duties of a spiritual Life, is no wonder; but is it not a wonder for one that is quickened in Christ, *Ephes.* 2. 5. created unto good works, fitted and formed for them, *Eph.* 2. 10. that hath Jesus Christ living in him, *Gal.* 2. 20. and a principle of holiness inclining and inabling him hereunto, should omit those actions that are proper to life. I beseech thee, Friend, do not displease thy self, and cross thy very Nature, to disobey thy God; surely he is worthy of more dutiful behaviour from thee.

12. The Reward will answer the Work, and the profit of positive Holiness will answer all thy pains. I confess Obe-

Obedience to the affirmative part of the Command, (to pray, and hear, and give to the Poor, *&c.* with those qualifications, and in that manner which God commandeth,) is much harder than to the Negative; and to do good is much more difficult than not to do evil; but thy labour shall not be in vain. I have told thee already all the reward of a meer negative Holiness, is a cooler Hell; but I must tell thee now, that the reward of positive Holiness will be a glorious, and blessed, and endless state of happiness in Heaven. A negative Holiness shall not have so much as a full negative Happiness; it shall not *abolish*, only *abate* the Torments of Hell; and the reason is, because such Holiness is counterfeit and hypocritical: But positive Holiness shall have both, a full negative and positive Happiness. God will do him good, that is good, and doth good, *Psal.*125.4. And if God undertake to do good to a person, he will do it to good purpose. Mans doing good, which is his positive Holiness, is little; yea, nothing to God. *My goodness extendeth not to thee*, saith *David*,

*Pſal.*16.3. But Gods doing good, which is his poſitive Bounty, is effectual, yea all in all with man; therefore when he would ſpeak in few words the great kindneſs he had in ſtore for his people, he only tells them, *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will not turn away from them to do them good.* And verſ. 41. *I will rejoyce over them to do them good.* Nay, though negative godlineſs obtains only at preſent ſome reſpect from men, and hereafter fewer ſtripes from Hells Jaylor; poſitive Holineſs hath a far greater, and another manner of reward, both here and hereafter. *In the doing of thy Commands there is great reward*, Pſal. 19. In the forbearing thy Prohibitions there is ſome reward, but in the doing thy Commands there is great reward. Poſitive Holineſs hath meat in its mouth, affirmative Obedience is its own recompence. It brings that calmneſs and ſerenity of mind, that nothing elſe can do. Negative Holineſs may do ſomewhat towards a negative quietneſs, *i. e.* a freedom from thoſe dreadful horrors and terrors which ſometimes ſeize thoſe who commit groſs unnatural ſins; but poſitive

Piety

Piety brings positive Peace. *Great peace have they which love thy Law*, Psal. 119. 165. *and nothing shall offend them.* They are not only freed from those gripes of Conscience with which many others are afflicted, but they have that spiritual joy and heart-comfort which the World is a stranger to, *Gal.* 6. 16. Faith which is not the least part of this holiness, fills the Soul with joy; yea, with joy unspeakable and full of Glory; *Rom.* 15. 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. I may appeal to the experience of a Christian, whether ever he find more comfort, than when he hath done his God faithful Service, and whether ever their hearts are more heavy, than when they have been negligent of their Duty. *David* and the *Israelites* were almost transported, their hearts leaped for joy that they had offered so willingly and liberally towards the building of the Temple; then the people rejoyced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord; and *David* the King also rejoyced with great joy, and the wine of their joy was so strong, that he was forced to give it vent.

vent. *Wherefore* David *bleſſed the Lord before all the Congregation, and ſaid, Bleſſed be thou Lord God of* Iſrael, *our Father for ever and ever*, &c. 2 *Chron.* 29. 9, 10, 11, 12, *&c.* But mark, God is ſo tender of this man that mindeth his Duty, that he will ſuffer no wind, no ill wind to blow upon him. *Great peace have they which love thy Law, and nothing ſhall offend them.* None muſt knock at their door, to diſturb them of their reſt. All the Creatures muſt be kind to them for his ſake; they muſt have nothing done to them which may be offenſive.

Yet this is not all the profit of Holineſs here, (though I ſhall paſs to the next) much leſs in the other World. As I ſaid before, a poſitive Holineſs ſhall have a poſitive Heaven. The Chriſtians avoiding what is evil, through the blood of Chriſt, ſhall be recompenced with a freedom from Hell; and the Chriſtians doing what is good through the ſame meritorious cauſe, ſhall be rewarded with the fruition of Heaven. The two Servants that had (not hid their Talents in a Napkin, as the negative Chriſtian doth, but) traded according

cording to his trust, and improved his stock faithfully in doing good, as he had opportunity; is commended by his Master for a good and faithful Servant, and honoured with his Masters own happiness. *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* No less will content his large liberal heart than his own joy for his holy Ones, a joy so great that it cannot enter into them; their narrow Vessels can never hold such an Ocean, therefore they must enter into it, and be immerst and swallow'd up as it were in this vast Sea of Pleasure and Solace. But, *Reader*, consider in this Chapter before the Text, *vers.* 34. What will be the profit of this sort of Piety, how infinitely the gains will exceed the pains, were they ten thousand times more than they can be. *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World; For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat*, &c. How doth every word speak Love and Life, every syllable drop Myrh and Mercy. In which we may observe the welcome those that are fruitful Christians shall find from Christ in the other World.

We

We have, 1. The eſtate they ſhall be inveſted with, and that is a Kingdom. 2. Their Title to it, and that is by Inhetance from their Father; *Te bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom.* 3. Its preparation for them, *Prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.* 4. Their formal introduction into it; *Come ye bleſſed of my Father.* 5. The qualification of the perſons that ſhall inherit this Kingdom, (*I was hungry, and ye fed me,*) ſuch as feed the Hungry, and cloath the Naked. 1. Obſerve, *Reader*, for thine encouragement, to mind poſitive Holineſs, the eſtate thy loving and bountiful Father hath provided for thee, when thou comeſt to age. It's no leſs than a Kingdom; thou ſhalt be a King now (and enjoy a Kingdom then, *He hath made us Kings and Prieſts unto God*, Rev. 1. 6.) with Palms in thy hand, *Rev.* 7. 9. (of which the door of the Holy of Holies was made, 1 *Kings* 6. 33. an emblem of perfect Victory over all thine enemies,) and Robes on thy back, *Rev.* 19. 8. (of perfect Purity, ſpotleſs Innocency, and Meridian Glory,) and a Crown on thy Head, *James* 1. 12. (ſuch a Crown

a Crown as will never wear, never waſte, but endure; and therefore called *Incorruptible*, 1 *Cor.* 9.25.) and reign with Chriſt for ever and ever. *Reader*, hath a Kingdom nothing of amiableneſs in it to allure thee? What fighting, and killing, and ſwearing, and forſwearing is there for an earthly Kingdom? O what ſhouldſt thou not do for an heavenly Kindgom! Where, 1. Is the greateſt Glory, (*a far more exceeding Weight of it*, 2 *Cor.* 5.17,18.) 2. The ſtrongeſt Security, (*a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken*, Heb. 11. No Devil or ſubtile Serpent can crawl into the Cœleſtial Paradiſe.) 3. The brighteſt Splendor, (*tranſparent as Chriſtal*, Rev. 21. Wherein the Inhabitants ſhall ſhine as the Sun, and much more luſtrouſly, *Matth.* 13.) 4. The higheſt Attendants (Cherubims and Seraphims ſtanding as Servants or Porters at the twelve Gates of the City, *Rev.* 21. 12.) 5. The greateſt Power, (*the Saints ſhall inherit all things*, Rev. 12.) Judge that World which now cenſureth and judgeth them, 1 *Cor.* 6. 2, 3. & 6. the moſt pure and perfect ſatisfaction, in every power and part of Soul and

and Body, (*There is fulneſs of Joy, and rivers of Pleaſures,*) and *verſ.* 7. eternity to compleat their felicity; 2 *Pet.* 1. 11. *So an entrance ſhall be adminiſtred into the everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

2. The Title, *Inherit the Kingdom.* It comes to them not by their Purchaſe, but by Chriſts Purchaſe; therefore called *the purchaſed Poſſeſſion*, *Epheſ.* 1. 14. *Until the Redemption of the purchaſed Poſſeſſion.* It comes not to them by their goodneſs, but by Gods Gift. *Fear not little Flock, it is your Fathers good pleaſure to give you a Kingdom, Luk.* 12. 32. It comes not to them by their Obedience, but by Inheritance from their Father. Chriſt is Gods natural Son and Heir of all things, by him Believers are Gods adopted Children, *Gal.* 3. 26. *Ye are all the Children of God through Faith in Jeſus Chriſt: and if Sons, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joynt-Heirs with Chriſt,* Rom. 8. 17.

3. Its preparation for them from the Foundation of the World. When God firſt erected the ſtately Fabrick of Heaven and Earth, probably he made the

the empireum Heaven the place of the blessed; for at first, when he laid the Foundations of the World, the Morning-Stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy; therefore it's likely the place of their Residence was made. Besides, it was prepared in the Decrees of God; they were destinated to a Diadem before they had a being.

4. Their formal admission into it, *Come ye blessed of my Father.* Come from all Sin, from all Sorrow, all Sufferings; Come from *Babylon* to *Sion*, from a barren Wilderness, where is no water for a thirsty Soul, to a fruitful pleasant Paradise, where are all sorts of luscious and heart-chearing Rarities. Come, where have ye been all this while? how could ye bear my absence so long? what have ye done in a Valley of Tears, a Bochim, a place of weeping, so many years? When he calls them to die, his Voice need not be unpleasant to them. He doth but call them as a Father his Child, out of the shower into his house. *Come my people enter into the Chambers, shut the door, hide your selves for a very little moment, till the Indignation be overpast,* Isa.

Isa. 28. 20. Come Child, go to bed, I will cause the dust to be a soft Couch of repose to thee, and when thou awakest in the Morning of the Resurrection all shall be well with thee; but his Voice at the Resurrection will be sweet indeed; Come Child, O come dear Child into my Arms and Embraces; come into my Heart, come into my very Soul, Come and take possession of my dear bought Purchase; *Come and inherit the Kingdom prepared for thee.* Come Child, and enjoy all that Honour, and Treasure, and Joy, and Delight, and Happiness, which thou hast so often pray'd, and wept, and watcht, and sighed, and sob'd for. Come Child to thy Fathers House, sit down at his Table, drink of his new Wine, and eat of his hidden Manna, and feast of the Tree of Life, that groweth in the midst of Paradise for ever and ever.

5. The qualification of the Persons that shall partake of this Possession, they are such as feed the Hungry, cloath the Naked, *&c.* *For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink.* *Reader*, dost thou not observe, that

that those who mind this positive Holiness, are the blessed of the Father, and the Heirs of the Kingdom, and wilt thou neglect? A Kingdom makes the greatest difference among men. The height of any ones ambition can be but a Kingdom; and will not a glorious joyful eternal Kingdom move thee?

CHAP. XL.

Arguments against sins of Omission. God delights chiefly in our doing good; and our opportunities for doing good will quickly be gone.

13. CONsider, God takes most pleasure in our positive Holiness. It's true he is pleased to see men *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts*; but nothing to that pleasure which he takes in seeing them live *righteously, soberly, and godly in this present evil World.* He likes *ceasing from evil*, because it's agreeable to his Word; but he likes better *doing of good*, because it's more conformable to his Will, *Isa.* 64. 5. *Thou meetest him that rejoyceth and*

worketh righteousness. Thou meetest him with the riches of Mercy, who worketh what is good with alacrity. If he come to thee, thou wilt not cast him away; nay, thou wilt run to meet him, and embrace him. As the Father of the Prodigal ran to meet his returning Son, *Luke* 15. And as one at odds, but willing to be reconciled, tells us, He will meet his Opposite half-way. And I may say of Gods meeting a Soul that worketh Righteousness, as God tells *Moses*; *Behold*, Aaron *thy Brother comes to meet thee, and when he seeth thee, he will be glad at his heart.* Behold, thy God and Father cometh to meet thee, and when he seeth thee, working Righteousness, he will be glad at his heart; nay, so glad, that the disadvantage of a mans Country shall not hinder him of this kindness, *Acts* 10. And *Peter* said, *I perceive now that God is no Respecter of persons; but in every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him.* God proclaimeth to all the World, That he delighteth in such a mans way, *Psal.* 73. 23. and therefore his Word which he hath given us for our

Rule

Rule herein, is called *his good and acceptable Will*, Rom. 12. 2. And the reason is, because such persons are most like God, therefore they have most of his love and delight. God is a pure Act, and so cannot but approve of them that are active. He is ever at work, *Joh.* 5. 17. *Hitherto my Father worketh, and I work.* And its righteousness he is always working, *The Lord is holy in all his Ways, and righteous in all his Works*, Psal. 145. He is good, and doth good; so that those who are positively holy, do most resemble him, and so do most delight him. We all take most pleasure in those Children that are our exactest Pictures. *Reader*, art thou negatively holy; Canst thou say, I am no Drunkard, no Glutton, no Adulterer? thou mayst say this, and be like the Devil, for the Devil himself may say as much. Canst thou say, I am no Thief, no Swearer, no Blasphemer, no Sabbath-breaker, no Trader with false Weights or false Measures, no Bearer of false witness against my Neighbour? A Beast may say as much, and thou mayst be free from these sins, and yet like a

Beast. But if thou livest in the love and delight of the blessed Majesty, doing his pleasure, this is to be like an Angel, *Psal.* 103. And doing good to others, this is to be like God, and this is that which takes his heart. Common humanity is much affected with one that aboundeth in goodness, and is rich in good Works; therefore the Apostle tells us, *That for a good man possibly some may even dare to die*, Rom. 5. The reason of which is, because the people of the *Jews* were divided into three sorts of Persons; there were *Reshagnim*, or τοὶ ἀσεβεῖς, the wicked or ungodly, those who lived without the Worship of God, and walked in prophane courses; there were also *Tsidikim*, or τοὶ δίκαιοι, the just or righteous, men of rigid righteousness, or severe innocency; and *Chasidim*, or τοὶ ἀγαθοὶ, the good and liberal, men of large Hearts and open Hands, to do good to others; who as publick Conduits, are of publick advantage in the places where they live. Now saith the Apostle, *Scarcely for a righteous man*; that is, for a man of austere Justice will one die; but for a good man, a man full of good works,

works, one that is bountiful to others, and uſeful in his Generation, *a man would even dare to die.* Humanity is ſo taken with doing good, that a man can be contented almoſt to die for ſuch; much more muſt goodneſs it ſelf, and the Fountain of all Goodneſs be affected therewith. He tells us, *That he is a God who executeth Kindneſs, Judgment, and Righteouſneſs: For in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord.* Both in doing them my ſelf, and ſeeing them done by others, *Pſal.* 11. *ult. Mich.* 6. 8.

What thinkeſt thou, *Reader*, of this motive to good Works, wouldſt thou not delight the heart of God? How long haſt thou by thy Omiſſions grieved him, and is it not yet time to rejoyce him? How often haſt thou diſpleaſed him? how many millions of times? and wilt thou not now pleaſe him? Thou daily ſeeſt, that though he hath no Obligations to his Creatures (but the contrary) *he doth them good, and gives them food and fruitful ſeaſons, and fills their Hearts with gladneſs.* And wilt thou not do thy utmoſt to glad his Heart, who hath above all apprehenſi-

ons obliged thee? Truly, he doth not deserve the name of a rational Creature, who doth not above all things seek to please his Maker; and there is no way hereunto like abounding in well-doing. Therefore the Apostle begs for the *Colossians*, *That they may be filled with the knowledge of his Will.* Why? that they might keep their Light in a dark Lanthorn, or have it as men wear a Glass-eye, for shew, and not for use; or that men might be able to talk the more of Religion, and the things that appertain thereunto? No, *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing*, εἰς πᾶσαν ἀρέσκειαν, to his whole liking and delight, that ye might please God. I, but how may this be done, he presently tells us how, *That ye may walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work.* There is no such way to please God, as fruitfulness in every good Work. It rejoyceth the Husbandman to see his Trees laden with fruit, to see his Fields cover'd over (as the *Psalmists* phrase is, *Psal. 65. ult.*) with Corn, and to see his returns answer his Cost. And it rejoyceth the blessed God,

God, to see an Heart that hath long lain fallow, and been barren, full of faith, and love, and humility, and heavenly-mindedness, and all the fruits of Righteousness; and so a Life that hath been idle and unprofitable, abundant in acts of Piety, Charity, and the like. *David*, who served the Wills of God in his Generation, he of all men was the man after Gods own heart.

14. Consider, thou hast but a little time to do good in, therefore it concerns thee to set speedily upon it, and to be diligent at it. Alas, how short is thy whole Life, from the Womb to the Tomb; *It's but a shadow that fleeth away, and continueth not; a Vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away*, it's nothing, *Job* 14. 2. *James* 4. 14. *Psal.* 39. 6. And how much of this time is gone, hath been spent as a tale that is told, impertinently, and to no purpose, in doing nothing, or in doing that which is worse than nothing, *Psal.* 90. 9. How short that time is that remaineth God only knoweth; for thy time is in his hand, not thine own; surely then it behoveth thee to redeem the

time, to make the most of it, and whilst thou hast it, to improve it for the doing of good, O Friend, hast thou loyter'd so long; is thy work so great, thy day to work in so short; and yet is it not time to bestir thy self? Is death at thy door? art thou within a step of eternity, within the view of the other World, and yet wilt thou not up and be doing? Can any assure thee of standing in the Vineyard another year; nay, another moneth; nay, another day; and is it not yet time to be fruitful? Dost thou not see that as Labourers are sent into the Vineyard at all hours, so they go out of the Vineyard at all hours. Thou owest a debt to Nature, to the God of Nature; the day of payment is not expressed, therefore it may be demanded at any time. *Reader*, though some fruit falls from the Tree by reason of its maturity; yet how much more is blown off, or cudgeld off, whilst it is green? Do not thine eyes see Coffins and Graves of all sorts and sizes? And wilt thou be as the silly Beasts, who though the Butcher come one day to the Field and fetch away one, another day

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and fetch away another to the ſlaughter; yet thoſe that remain neither miſs them that are gone, nor dread their own deſtinies. O Friend, what doſt thou think to do, when time is gone, and death comes? wilt thou ſtop the Sun of thy Life in its career? Will it hear thy Voice, and obey thy Command? Or wilt thou call to Time, as *Iſraels* General did to the Sun; *Stand ſtill*, that I may be avenged of all my Senſuality, and Idleneſs, and Pride, and Impenitency, and all my ſpiritual Enemies, which have robbed me of God and Heaven? Do you imagine Time will be at your beck? Or are the apprehenſions of the King of Terrors, and of a dreadful Day of Judgment, and of an amazing Eternity, no whit rouſing or awakening to thee?

Canſt thou believe a dark night of Death a fit time to trim, and adorn, and attrire thy Soul in, for the love and embraces of the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Now God gives thee a day, but of how many hours, whether longer or ſhorter, thou canſt not tell. Thy life is fleeing away, Time's Chariot moves

moves ſwiftly: *Yet a little while the Light is with thee, walk while thou haſt the Light, leſt Darkneſs come upon thee,* Joh. 12. 35. Two things eſpecially occur in theſe words, 1. Now thou haſt time, yea opportunity, make much of it, improve it to the utmoſt; *Walk while thou haſt the Light.* God allots thee a due time for bringing forth: Hence it's Obſervable, That God gave the Figg-Tree three years to bear in; other Trees, as the Olive and Nut-Tree required more time, but ſo ſucculent a Plant as the Figg-Tree needed no more; nay, ſaith *A Lapide, If the Figg-Tree bear not the third year, it will never bear.* God never expected Brick without allowing Straw, nor requires his Rent before Quarter-day, or the time of payment comes. 2. Thy time, or at leaſt thine opportunity is very ſhort; therefore work much in a little time, whilſt thou haſt the Light; *Yet a little while the Light is with thee, a little while and the Light will be taken from thee.* A little while, and the light of Life; a little while, and the light of means, and helps, and ſeaſons of Grace will be taken from thee.

And

And what then? truly, then darkneſs will come upon thee, (a dark Grave will be the receptacle of thy Body, and a dark Dungeon will be the receptacle of thy Soul, if thou now loytereſt,) and darkneſs is no fit ſtate, nor a dark night a fit time to walk or work in.

Darkneſs is dreadful, and every thing ſeems more frightful in the night. If a mans houſe be on fire in the night, that he hears the noiſe and ratling of the flames, ſeeth no way of eſcape for himſelf, his Wife, and his Children; O in what a plight is he? he ſtands naked in his Chamber, at a loſs what to do, he is full of horrors and terrors, to be conceived by none but himſelf. How pale is his Countenance, and how heavy his Heart, when he ſeeth the flames ſeizing his Chamber, when they come near his Body; he is almoſt drown'd to death with grief and ſorrow before he is burnt to death with the flames. So it is, when the night of death ſurpriſeth the Loyterer, that hath neglected the doing of good, when Conſcience is in a flame about his ears, and frights him with the fore-apprehenſions of the unquenchable burnings,

burnings, and with cutting reflections upon his former negligence and unprofitableneſs; the man is quaking and trembling, not knowing what to do: Is that a time to put on the Armor of Light, when he is putting off his natural Life? Is a dark night of fear and amazement a time to ſeek God in, or to work out his own Salvation? Ah Friend, it is too great and weighty a work to be done in an inſtant, and the poor Sinner is too much aſtoniſhed to ſet about it. If the fear of a danger gone, and over, kill a *Nabal*, and make his heart like a ſtone; what will the fear, the certain knowledge of wrath, of the wrath of a God, of the everlaſting wrath of a God to come, do to a poor Sinner? O Friend, make uſe of time while thou haſt it. *Work the work of him that ſent thee while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work*, Joh. 9. 4.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLI.

The grand cauſe of ſins of Omiſſion. An unregenerate heart, with the cure of it; a renewed nature.

I Proceed now to the ſecond and third particulars, *viz.* The cauſe and cure of ſins of Omiſſion; I ſhall recite one more general and principal Cauſe, others more ſpecial, and leſs principal, and joyn the Cure to the Cauſe.

1. The grand Cauſe of theſe ſins of Omiſſion, is an unregenerate Heart. Where the ground is unplowed, and lieth fallow, no Fruit can be expected; Weeds may grow, good Corn cannot grow there: When the Heart is not broken up by Repentance, but hardned through cuſtom and continuance in ſin, no fruits of Righteouſneſs, no Faith, no Love, or Humility, *&c.* can be expected there. *Can the Leopard change his ſpots, or the Blackamore his skin? no more can he that is accuſtomed to do evil, learn to do well,* Jer. 23. 13. Natures Fruit will be according to its Root, whe-

whether sweet or sowr. There must of necessity be a good Foundation laid, before there can be a good Superstructure of Holiness rear'd. An unrenewed Heart hath no tendency towards it, and Nature will work little farther than its own inclination. The Water will run as the Tyde carrieth it. Nay, the unregenerate Heart is contrary to religious Duties, hath an hatred and abhorrency of them, no wonder then if it live in the Omission of them. The Carnal Mind, Lady Reason her self, the chief and principal faculty of man, is enmity against God, *It is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*, Rom. 8. 7. He who is an enemy to a mans Person, will never be a friend to his Precepts; much less will he who is enmity against Gods Life, be subject to his Law. There is an impossibility hereof, *Neither indeed can be.* Till the Heart be changed, it will never like the Divine Commands, that are so contrary to its lusts; and till it be brought to love them, it will neglect Obedience to them. When the Will, the great Commander, is set against the Laws of God,

God, how can any of the other faculties ſubmit to them? As in fleſhly luſts, the titillation is from ſenſe and appetite; but the conſent of the reaſonable Will, is, that which makes it a vice; ſo unto good, the inclination may poſſibly be from example or education, but the royal aſſent of the Will is that which makes it a virtue. The Devil finds it no hard work to part Sin and his Duty, whoſe Will never choſe it, and whoſe Heart never lovèd it; but it will be much eaſier to part him and his Duty, whoſe Will and Heart have an enmity and reluctancy againſt it. If a Lads calling doth not ſuit his *genius*, he ſeldom comes to do any thing well, or to be expert at it; much leſs when he hates it. The Scholar who loves not his Book, will hardly proceed from the degree of a Dunce; much leſs he who loatheth his Book. If the nature of a man be contrary to God, and his Ways, the preſence of God is troubleſome to him, *Job* 21. 14. *They ſay to God, depart from us*; and the Worſhip of God is tedious to them. *When will the new Moon be gone, and the Sabbath be over.* And the Precepts of God

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are Fetters and Cords to them, *Psal.* 2. 3. *Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us.* Common gifts of the Spirit, as Illumination, Convictions, sudden flashes of Affection may do somewhat against this distemper of Nature, but the virtue of that Physick is soon spent, and then it returns to its former illness. Colours not laid in Oyl, will soon be washt off.

Indeed, how can it be expected, that a Body separated from a Soul should stir or move; and much less can it be expected, that a Soul without Christ, its life, should pray, or hear, or watch, or do any thing according to the Will of God. *Paul* tells us, *I live*, i. e. *to God, according to his Will, doing what is good:* But how comes this about, at whose cost doth he keep house; *yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* I may thank my Lord Jesus, I am beholden unto him for all ability unto sacred actions: *And the life that I live in the Flesh, is by Faith in the Son of God.* It's from Christ alone that I receive supplies of strength and virtue to live to God. What will then become of the Unregenerate person, who

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is without Chriſt, *Epheſ.* 2. 12. *He who hath not the Son, hath not life.* And he who hath not life, I am ſure cannot live to God. The Apoſtle fitly joyns them together, Trees without fruit, twice dead, *i. e.* certainly dead, or dead indeed, *Jude, verſ.* 12. Where the ſtock is dead, the branches muſt needs wither; and if they wither, there is little likelihood of fruit.

Beſides, an unregenerate Soul is neceſſitated (as to internal Omiſſions, in regard of his want of ſpiritual life, ſo) to external Omiſſions, in regard of his engagements to his carnal intereſt. One is poſſibly married to Profit, and when that calls him, he muſt go, though Cloſet or Family, or any other Duties bid him ſtay, *Matth.* 8. *No man can ſerve God and Mammon, but he will love the one, and hate the other; or diſpiſe the one, and cleave to the other.* When once there comes a competition between godlineſs and gain in the life, it will quickly appear which hath the greateſt ſway and predominancy in the heart. The young man would not follow Chriſt, becauſe his Eſtate denied to give him leave.

Had he been less rich, he had been (probably) more religious; but having once espoused the interest of his Wealth, he could not leave it, though he left God, and Christ, and Heaven for it. Another is ingaged to Pleasures, and when they require his presence, it cannot be supposed that he will deny them for the exercises of Religion, which are so painful to him. *Herod* may pretend fair for Religion, and profess some kindness to the *Baptist*, but when his *Dalilah* commands, his love to her over-comes his fear of *John*; and instead of doing many things, or any thing that was good, he cuts off that Head which had a Tongue in it so bold, as to reprove him for his sin. A third is wedded to Honour, and if that be inconsistent with Holiness, as sometimes the case may be, he will neglect his Duty to God, to pay his Homage to this *Diana*. *Jehu* will do one good work, because Gods and his interest were both conjoyned. His slaughter of *Ahabs* Sons and Prophets tended to settle him the firmer in his Throne, and so his ambition call'd for the same with Gods Command. But *Jehu* will omit another

another good work, he will not deſtroy the Idolatry at *Dan* and *Bethel*, becauſe there his intereſt and Gods were divided; for though God enjoyned the deſtruction of Idols in one place as well as another, yet *Jehu* was fearful as his Predeceſſor *Jeroboam*, that the Crown would not be faſt on his Head, if the people ſhould have gone up to *Jeruſalem* to Worſhip; therefore when his carnal intereſt forbids what God commands, he diſobeys God, to ſerve that. There is no unſanctified perſon in the World, but hath ſome worldly intereſt of his own ſuperiour and paramount; nay, in many things oppoſite and contrary to the intereſt of God; and therefore though he may obey God, while both thoſe Intereſts can agree and walk together in the ſame way, yet when there is a neceſſity of their parting, he will cleave to that which hath the predominancy within him. Where God hath ſome reſidence, and is entertain'd but as an underling to the Fleſh, when it comes to this paſs, that one muſt be turn'd out of doors (for they cannot agree long together) you may eaſily gueſs which it ſhall be.

The Cure of this, *Reader*, must be (if thou art not born again) to get a new heart. An old heart will never serve for, or enable unto the acts of new Obedience. The water will rise no higher than the Fountain head whence it floweth. If you would have a Clock to move regularly, and the hand without to go true, you must have the wheels and poizes right within. A good temperament of Body may cause a propensity to some things that are honest; but that excellency must be of little worth, that hath its Original from mans basest part, (as those materials are mean which arise out of the potentiality of the matter,) and truly that honesty deserves not the name of Virtue, being not quickened with the command of Reason. An exact Constitution may help a man to be mild, meek, courteous, modest, shame-faced; but these cannot be adopted into the Family of goodness, because here, as they say, in the motion of the Serpent, the tayl leads the way to the Head; the Body rules and governs the Soul, and the mans perfection is from his meanest and worst part. Besides,

ſides, the cauſe of all this ſeeming-virtue is mutable and mortal. Age, or Sickneſs, or change of Air, or of Condition, may alter a mans good nature; and then where is his Religion? Truly, as a Comet, it came without giving notice, and goeth away without giving warning. The Cauſe being taken away, the Effect ceaſeth.

Improved Reaſon will do more towards Religion, than a ſound bodily Conſtitution; but yet the Moraliſts, for all their Reaſon, were far enough from being religious. Indeed, reaſon rightly improved, is a ſpecial help, a ſerviceable Hand-Maid to Religion; but as they uſed it, or rather abuſed it, it became an Oppoſite and Enemy to Religion. The Mind or Underſtanding, which is the ſupream faculty of the Soul, they ſet up in defiance of Revelations, and with it they out-face Illumination. Ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος, the natural man, *animalis homo*, he that hath no more than a reaſonable Soul, *perceiveth not the things of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. Na-

tural Light will not help a man to ſee ſpiritual Objects; (becauſe there is no proportion between the Faculty and the Object) and becauſe it cannot apprehend them, therefore it condemneth them as fooliſh and ridiculous. It hath its high thoughts, and carnal reaſonings, and vain imaginations, in which ſtrong holds, Luſt ſhelters it ſelf againſt all the Convictions of our own Spirit. And as the Moraliſt deifieth his Underſtanding in oppoſition to Faith, ſo he idolizeth the liberty of his Will in oppoſition to the ſpecial Energy and Virtue of the Holy Ghoſt. Liberty, ſaith the Philoſopher, I have by Nature; that is, a freedom to chooſe Good or Evil, I have in common with the reſt of Mankind, but goodneſs to that liberty, or an application of it to the choice of good rather than evil; this I have from my ſelf, my Reaſon, and I am beholden to my ſelf for it. So that, as *Auſtin* ſaith, if this be true, *Si nobis poteſt libera voluntas ex deo eſt, quoad hoc poteſt eſſe, vel bona, vel mala, bona vero voluntas ex nobis eſt; melius eſt id quod a nobis quam quod ab illo eſt*, De peccat. merit. lib. 2. cap.

cap. 18. If our Will be free from God, it may be good or bad; but if it be good from our ſelves, better is that which we have from our ſelves, than that which we have from God. In ſhort, this moral Votary differs from the natural, that the Original of the latters Religion, is the Conſtitution of his Body, of the formers is the chief faculty of his Soul; but neither of theſe can make a man religious, for where the Vitals are tainted, and the inward parts infected, it's in vain to uſe Plaiſters or outward Medicines. Indeed, here is the great fault of both the former, that they take no notice of the depravation of mans nature, which alone would convince them of the neceſſity of a change. They who have crazed Principles, and crackt Brains, cannot ſee any defects in themſelves, being prepoſſeſt with an Opinion of their own perfection. Both the Naturaliſts and the Moraliſts are ſo far from knowing the plague of their own hearts, that they count every thing of Nature rather lovely than loathſome. And as among the *Moors*, blackneſs is counted a beauty,

becauſe it's common and general, and they ſee no other. So with theſe men, the vitioſity of Nature, which is the ſeed of all evil, is commended for the ſpring of Virtue. Indeed, they are in love with their Diſeaſe, and inſtead of Health, have this unhappineſs, that they feel not their own ſickneſs; ſo that neither the one nor the other can be religious, or perform thoſe Duties which God requireth.

Regeneration is abſolutely requiſite to this; He that layeth not that for his Foundation, can never build a Temple for God, he muſt needs prove a Bankrupt; that is, worſe than naught when he begun. Some tell us, that Trees ſhoot above ground as much and no more than they do under ground. I am ſure there is no more godlineſs outwardly in the Life, than there is inwardly in the Heart. If the fear and love of God be the great ſpring to ſet all the wheels a going in the ways of Religion, then all is right, but till then nothing is right. If there be not the Oyl of ſolid Grace in the Veſſel of the Heart, to feed Profeſſion in the Lamp and Holineſs in the Life, both will quickly fail. When

When God intends that his people should *walk in his Statutes, keep his Judgments, and do them*; what doth he for them to prepare them and enable them thereunto? truly this, he regenerates them, and changeth them, and putteth a new principle into them: *I will give them a new Heart, and a new Spirit*, Ezek. 36. 26. I will cast them in the fire of my Word, and though they are old, tough untoward metal, I will melt them, and soften them, and they shall run into my mould. But how can this be? Nature will still run into its old temper; though it may be a little alter'd in its form, yet it will still continue the same in substance and matter. No, *I will put my Spirit into them, and they shall walk in my Commandments, and do them.* My Spirit shall renew and quite alter their Spirits, it shall turn the stream of their Hearts from the World and Flesh unto God, and shall be in them a principle of spiritual life and motion, strengthening them *to walk in my Statutes, and to keep my Commandments, and do them.* The natural Spirit would have served to done natural actions. The

Spirit

Spirit of the World would have served for a man to have walked according to the course of the World; but no less than a new Spirit can serve for a new life, and nothing below the Spirit of God can help unto a faithful walking with God.

Two things, *Reader*, I would specially commend to thee, without which thou canst never rightly obey any positive Precept; and they are to make sure of a change in thy Judgment and thy Heart.

1. Make sure of a change in thy Judgment concerning Sin and Obedience. By nature thou hast lookt on Sin, as *Achan* on the Wedge of Gold, and *David* on *Bathsheba* as lovely and desirable; thou hast beheld it through the Devils Spectacles, and so hast judged it elegible, if still thou art of the same mind; though thou mayst for shame or fear forbear it a while, yet as two Lovers parted by their Parents contrive and conspire how to meet together, and do find some opportunity or other concurring with their desires; so thou wilt find some time to give thy old beloved Lusts

Luſts a viſit, and as cloſe and fond embraces as ever. There is a neceſſity of being renewed in the Spirit of thy Mind, if thou wouldſt not be conformable to the World in ſin and folly, *Rom.* 12. 2. Formerly thou haſt lookt on Holineſs as a mean contemptible thing, as a fooliſh ridiculous thing, as a fruitleſs unprofitable thing, *Job.*7.48, 49. 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. *Job* 21. 15. *Mal.* 3. and thereupon haſt turn'd thy back upon it: If thou art ſtill of the ſame Opinion, thou will be ſtill of thine old ungodly Converſation. Till thy Mind be enlightned to ſee the beauty of Holineſs, the excellency of Obedience, the equity of the Divine Precepts, the Right and Title that God hath to thy Perſon and Service, thou wilt never perform Duties to any purpoſe.

Till thou art turn'd from Darkneſs to Light, thou canſt never be turned from Satan to God, *Acts* 26. 18. *They muſt be renewed in knowledge after the Image of him that created them, who would put on the new man, which is after God, is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs,* Col.

Col. 3. 10. Ephes. 4. 24. This illumination is requisite in order to the second thing; there must be a change in the Judgment, before there can be any in Affections.

2. Get thy Heart changed about Sin and Obedience: If there be not a loathing in thee of Sin, and a love in thee to Holiness, thou wilt not much or long forsake the one, or follow after the other. By nature thou lovest Sin as thy Meat and Drink, *Prov.* 4. 17. as thy Dainties, *Psal.* 141. as thy Members, *Col.* 3. 5. as thy right Hand and right Eye, *Matth.* 18. as thy self, *Matth.* 16. 24. Now whilst this love continueth, thou canst never leave sin. As the Dog may forbear the meat on the Table whilst the Servants eye is on him, for fear of the Cudgel. But when he can come at it alone and scape, he will fall to it greedily. If from a Conviction of the great evil of Sin, thy Heart be not brought to abhor it; though some qualm of Conscience, or sharp Providence may make thee desist from it at present; yet when these Distempers (as thou counteſt them) are gone, thy

thy Stomach will come; and as one recovered of an Ague, thou wilt fall too more greedily, and feed on it more largely than ever. By Nature thy heart is ſet againſt Obedience. Thy Voice is, *I will not have this man to Rule over me.* The Voice of thy Heart, which was the Voice of their Lips; for they ſpoke plain *Engliſh. As for the word that thou haſt ſpoken to us in the Name of the Lord, we will not do it*, Jer. 44. 16. Both the King and his Laws are odious to thee, and how then ſhall they be obey'd? If thy Heart continue thus bent againſt Holineſs, doſt thou think thou canſt mind it? All thy ſhews, and ſhadows, and flouriſhes, and profeſſion, and privilegdes, and purpoſes, and promiſes, will ſignifie nothing for Holineſs, or againſt Sin; till thou canſt ſay with *David, I hate every falſe way: but thy Law do I love*, Pſal. 119. He is hardly ſeparated from his Maſter, be he God or Satan who is bound and faſtened to him with the heart-ſtrings of love. And the Devil ſhall find it a tough taſk to rob Chriſt of that Servaut, who takes pleaſure and delight in his work. Therefore,

fore, *Reader*, thy judgment must be alter'd, that thou mayst judge of Sin and Holiness aright, and thereby thy heart be brought out of love with Sin, and in love with Holiness; and then the work of Piety will go on pleasantly, and thou wilt chearfully obey the Divine Commands. His Statutes will be thy Songs, whilst thou art in this house of thy Pilgrimage, *Psal.* 119. O how readily wilt thou set about thy business, when the Laws of God are the joy of thy heart, *Psal.* 119. 111. And thy delight is in his Law, *Psal.* 1. when thou hast a nature in thee that inclines, and inableth, and ingageth thee to godliness, when thou canst savour and relish Duties and Ordinances, and tast them more pleasant to thy Soul, than ever the greatest Dainties have been to thy Body.

If thou wouldst be truly and positively holy, thou seest, *Reader*, a necessity of Conversion; without it thou canst no more act holily, than a dead man can move, or a stone walk, or the Tyde of it self turn backward, when in its full strength and career. What then

then wilt thou do? For I muſt confeſs withall, that this regenerating Work, which is a reſurrection from the Dead, and a new Creation, is altogether beyond thy power. Thou canſt as ſoon ſtop the Sun in its courſe, and Seal up the influence of the Stars, as convert thy ſelf. But to encourage thee, know that there is help to be had; God hath proclaimed himſelf the Author of it; *James* 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us*, (and his Word and Miniſters the Inſtruments of it) *by the word of Truth.* ſo *Acts* 26.18. 1 *Cor.* 4. 15. So that thy work muſt be to wait on God in his Word, and to beg hard of him, that he would be found of thee in his own way. Alas, how ſhouldſt thou fill Heaven and Earth night and day with thy Cries, and Groans, and Tears, and Prayers; when thou conſidereſt, except thou liveſt to God, and walkeſt after the Spirit, thou art loſt for ever; and without a new Heart and new Spirit thou canſt not live or walk ſo, and none but God can do this for thee. O Friend, fall down on thy knees before him, acknowledge thy unworthineſs;

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urge God with his Promiſe, *I will give you a new heart, and a new Spirit will I put into you; and I will take away your hearts of ſtone, and give unto you hearts of Fleſh. And I will put my Spirit into you, and cauſe you to walk in my ways,* &c. *Ezek.* 38. 26, 27. God cannot deny his own hand-writing, he will make good what he hath ſpoken. Look up to Jeſus Chriſt to plead for thee, who died to purchaſe Holineſs, and delights to ſee that paid which he hath bought; and hath God engaged to him, *That he ſhall ſee the travail of his Soul, to his ſatisfaction*, Iſa. 53. 10. and perſevere in ſo doing, knowing thou ſhalt reap in time, if thou fainteſt not.

CHAP. XLII.

Another cauſe of ſins of Omiſſion. Ignorance, with the cure of it; labouring after knowledge.

2. ANother cauſe of ſins of Omiſſion, is Ignorance. They who know not their Maſters Will can never do

do it. Let Papiſts ſay, *That Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion*; the Word of God, and our own experience do loudly ſpeak the contrary; *Epheſ.* 4. 18. *They are eſtranged from the life of God*, (*i. e.* a life of Holineſs, a life in Heaven,) *through the ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the blindneſs of their hearts.* A blind man may well miſs his way, and a blind Mind can never do his work. Whatever the World talks of their honeſty and goodneſs, notwithſtanding their ignorance, *Without knowledge the mind is not good*, Prov. 19. 2. They preſume to excuſe their dark Heads with their good Hearts, but theſe two are inconſiſtent. A dark Cellar is not fuller of Vermine, nor a dark hole of duſt, than a dark Heart is of filthineſs; *Hoſ.* 4. 1, 2. They who want the knowledge of God, are under the dominion of the Devil. He is the Ruler of the darkneſs of this World, *Epheſ.* 6. And I am ſure the unclean Spirit never bears ſway in a clean Heart, nor this evil Spirit in a good Heart. No, as the Eagle, he firſt pecks out the eyes of his prey, and then devours it. How eaſily is a

blind Soul conquer'd and kill'd by the enemies of his Salvation? What Error will not an ignorant Creature ſwallow down? he is like water, ready to take the impreſſion and form of what Veſſel you pleaſe to pour him into, *Matth.* 22. 29. Our Saviour tells the *Sadduces*, *That they erred, not knowing the Scriptures.* And the Apoſtles told the *Corinthians*, who doubted at leaſt about the Reſurrection, (as the *Sadduces* denied it) *Some have not the knowledge of God*, 1 Cor. 15. 32. What crime will not an ignorant man commit? Knowledge to the Mind is as Light to the World, which diſcovers our way, and thereby prevents our wandrings; but it's no wonder at all for men in the night, and darkneſs of ignorance, to go aſtray, or to ſtumble and fall. *If a man walk in the night, he ſtumbleth, becauſe he ſeeth not the light of this World*, Joh. 11. 9. Why do we think Sin is called *a work of darkneſs*, truly, not only becauſe it's from the Devil, the Prince of Darkneſs; and he that doth evil loveth darkneſs, hates the light, and it's the way to blackneſs of darkneſs; but alſo becauſe it's conceived

ceived in the Womb of a dark Heart; The Prince of Darkneſs may beget what Monſters he pleaſeth on ſuch Perſons, 2 *Tim.* 3. 3. *Ignorant women were laden with divers luſts.* No ſoil fuller of ſuch weeds, than that which is not manured with knowledge. St. *Paul*'s ignorance was the ground of his waſting the Church at ſuch a cruel rate. *I was a Blaſphemer, a Perſecutor, injurious, but I did it ignorantly,* 1 Tim. 1. 13. That Monſter Sin, which the Sun hid his head as aſhamed to behold the Murther of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, had ignorance for its Mother: *Acts* 3. 15. *Ye killed the Prince of Life,* verſ. 17. *And now Brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did alſo your Rulers.* So the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.* Now if ignorance be the cauſe of ſuch grieveous Commiſſions, it muſt much more be the cauſe of Omiſſion; for in all theſe Commiſſions there are great Omiſſions: but I ſhall ſhew particularly that Ignorance is one cauſe of ſins of Omiſſion.

We are bound to love God, and that *with all our Hearts, and with all our Souls,*

and with all our strength, Matth. 22.37. But is it possible to love one whom we are ignorant of? Did ever any fear an unknown Evil, or desire or delight in an unknown Good? Are not the greatest Rarities, and richest Jewels of the World, that are undiscovered, undesired. The Apostle saith, *He that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?* 1 Joh. 3. I am sure he that doth not so much as see God with the eye of his Soul, his Understanding can never love him. We say, *What the eye sees not, the heart grieves not*; it's as true, what the eye seeth not, the heart loves not.

Who can obey Divine Precepts, who is ignorant of them? or fear Divine Threatnings, who doth not know them? or be allured by Divine Promises, who is altogether a stranger to them? God, and Christ, and Pardon, and Life, and Promises, & Covenant, may stand long enough knocking at the door of an Heart fastened with Ignorance, before they will find admittance. It is our Duty, our great Gospel-Duty, to believe in Christ, *Joh. 6. This is his Commandment, that ye believe in him whom*

whom he hath sent, 1 *Joh.*3.23. But ignorance hinders this, *How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard*, Rom.10. 10. Who will trust a meer stranger, especially in a matter of weight? I had need to know him well whom I trust with my Soul and Salvation, with all I am worth for this and the other World. A wise man will not venture his Estate, much less his Life, least of all his Soul with one of whose integrity, and faithfulness, and ability, and responsibleness he hath not good assurance. The *Psalmist* saying is, *They that know thy Name, will trust in thee*, Psal.9.10. They who know thy Grace & Goodness, thy Promise, and Power, and Truth, they will trust thee, but others will not. *Paul's* hope could not have been so high, nor the Wine of his joy so brisk, when his Death drew near, had it not been for his great acquaintance with him with, whom he had ventured his all; 2 *Tim.*1.12. *I know whom I have believed*, (how willing, how ready, how able to save me,) *and what I have committed to him, he is able to keep for me against that day*. Knowledg is so requisite to Faith, that it's once & again put for Faith, *Isa.*53.10.

1 *Cor.* 2. 2. *Joh.* 17. 3. *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. but Ignorance is Faiths great hinderance.

Again, Our Duty is to repent even pain of eternal perdition, *Luke* 13. 3. *Matth.* 11. 22, 23. But ignorance cauſeth men to omit this as well as the other. Where there is a vail upon the Underſtanding, there is ever a caul upon the Heart and Conſcience. As in the night ſeaſon, we have always the hardeſt Froſts and the coldeſt weather. Therefore the Holy Ghoſt tells us, when *Iſrael* ſhall repent and turn to the Lord, *The vail ſhall be taken away*, 2 Cor. 3. 16, 17. While the vail remains, they are ſtill turning more and more from God, till wrath come upon them to the uttermoſt; but when the Vail ſhall be taken away, that they ſhall ſee the evil, and miſchief, and loathſomeneſs, and folly of thoſe ways they have turned to; and alſo for the beauty, and amiableneſs, and bounty, and kindneſs of that God they have turned from, then they will quickly return unto the Lord. Indeed, men may thank their Ignorance for moſt of their Omiſſions, eſpecially the Heathen, and many Chriſtians who live in dark

corners

corners of the Land. I, and many who are as void and empty of Knowledge, as the Heathen who live under the Goſpel. Many of theſe neglect Family-Duties, Cloſet-Prayer, a ſtrict Sanctification of the Lords-Day, edifying others to their power as opportunity is offer'd them, and ſeveral others, becauſe they do not underſtand them to be their Duty.

Reader, the cure of this muſt be for thee, if ignorant, to labour after the Knowledge of God, and thy Duty to him. When *David* leaves his charge with his Son *Solomon*, to ſerve and worſhip the bleſſed God, as the great buſineſs of his life; Mark how he begins with the means thereof, and concludes with the motive thereto. *And thou* Solomon *my Son, know the God of thy Fathers, and ſerve him with a perfect heart and willing mind: If thou ſeek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forſake him, he will caſt thee off for ever*, 1 Chron. 28. 9. As if he had ſaid, *Solomon*, thou Son of my Love, thou Son of my Vows, I am now dying, and going to my long home; Nature and Grace, my love to

thee, and to God, do both strongly incline me to desire thy well-fare, and to wish thee well eternally; I know not better how to speak and declare it, than by charging and commanding thee, that what-ever thou omittest or neglectest, thou wouldst adore and worship the God of thy Fathers, and that not formally and customarily, but solemnly and sincerely, with a perfect Heart and willing Mind; and to this end there is a necessity of thy knowing him. Till thou knowest his Grace and Goodness, thou wilt never love him; till thou knowest his Holiness and Justice, thou wilt never fear him; till thou knowest his Promises, and Power, and Faithfulness, thou wilt never trust him; and till thou knowest his boundless Soveraignty and Dominion over, his unquestionable Right and Propriety in the works of his Hands, thou wilt never obey him; therefore study the knowledge of this God of thy Fathers, that thou mayst serve him; for be assured, he will not be mocked: *But with the Upright, he will carry himself upright; and with the Froward, he will carry himself froward,* Psal.

Pſal. 18. *If thou liveſt after the Fleſh, thou ſhalt die; if thou walkeſt after the ſpirit, thou ſhalt live.* If thou ſeek him in his own way, with all thy Heart, as the great work and buſineſs of thy Life, he will reveal himſelf to thee, and be found of thee in a way of Grace and Favour; but if thou imbrace the World, or the Fleſh, as thy Soveraigns or Portions, and ſo caſt him off; be confident he will forſake and caſt thee off for ever, and then what will Devils do to thee, and what miſery will not ſurprize thee? Friend, God affords thee many helps for knowledge, and wilt thou not labour after it? ſhall men ſtumble, and fall into Hell, for want of doing their Duties; and neglect to do their Duties for want of knowledge, and that in the clear Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel, as thoſe do that live in the night and darkneſs of Heatheniſm and Paganiſm? *Reader*, wilt thou not ſee at Mid-day, at Noon-day? ſhall neither the Works nor Word of God teach thee the knowledge of him? Wouldſt thou do the Will of God or not? if thou wouldſt not, I have no more to ſay to thee, *But the Lord*

Lord have mercy on thee. If thou wouldſt, as thou muſt, if ever thou be ſaved; *Matth.* 23. Thou ſeeſt a neceſſity of knowledge, for can thy Child or Servant do thy Will, if they be ignorant of thy Will. Is it rational to expect, that one who knoweth not what thou wouldſt have, ſhould do what thou wouldſt have? Why canſt not thou make thy Beaſt as pliable, and as obedient to thee as thy Son? Is it not becauſe thy Beaſt is not ſo capable of underſtanding thy mind as thy Son is? Nay, if thou ſhouldſt do what God commands, and not know that he commanded it, thou couldſt not obey him in it; for all Obedience conſiſteth in doing what God bids us, becauſe he bids us, *Pſal.* 119. 5, 6. For unleſs his Authority do principally ſway the Conſcience, in our ſubjection to what he enjoyns, it's nothing worth. God hates blind Sacrifices, *Mal.* 1. *Reader*, wouldſt thou have high and honourable thoughts of God? wouldſt thou have awful and reverential apprehenſions of God? wouldſt thou have Heart and Life wholly at his Command, then know him,

him, *Pſal.* 78. 1. *In* Judah *is God known, his Name is great in* Iſrael. How comes his Name to be ſo much reverenced, and praiſed, and admired in his Church more than in all the World beſide; but becauſe there he is better known. *In* Judah *is God known*; thence his Name is ſo great in *Iſrael*. *Father, the World hath not known thee, but theſe have known thee*, Joh. 17. So that, *Reader*, if ever thou wouldſt eſteem, and honour, and love, and obey God, get the knowledge of him. This is ſpiritual life, and the ſeed of eternal, *Joh.* 17. 3. Be not bruitiſh in the ſhape of a man, as the Horſe and Mule which hath no underſtanding, *Pſal.* 32. 9. *Pſal.* 49. *ult.* *Pſal.* 92. 6. but take any pains in hearing, and reading, and meditating, and in conferring with others, that thou mayſt get knowledge. *They ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed.* The Merchant ventures to and fro, from Port to Port, in a wooden bottom, to increaſe his Wealth, and get ſome precious Pearls. Knowledge is a Jewel of much greater value; Let no labour be thought too much for it, eſpecially *cry after Knowledge, and*

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lift up thy Voice for Underſtanding; ſeek her as Silver, and ſearch for her as for hid Treaſure: Then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God, Prov. 2. 4, 5, 6.

CHAP. XLIII.

Another cauſe of ſins of Omiſſion, Idleneſs, with the cure of it.

3. A Third cauſe of ſins of Omiſſion, is Idleneſs. Negative Holineſs requires no great pains; a man may forbear Drunkenneſs, ſwearing, lying, ſtealing, *&c.* without any great labour. A man may keep his Bed, or his Chair all day, and ſo do no hurt. Some men, as the Hiſtorian obſerves, are *ſola ſocordia innocentes*, do no miſchief (not becauſe they dare not, God having forbidden it, but) becauſe it would coſt them ſome pains to do it. Their Heads muſt work to plot and contrive it, and their Hands to manage and execute it. There is a ſluggiſh temper and poorneſs of ſpirit in many men, who prefer a mean quiet before

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before a treaſure with labour. The Sluggard would do evil as other men, only he is unwilling to loſe his ſleep and eaſe, as they do to accompliſh their wicked deſigns; and he would do good as others, (I mean in regard of the matter of Duties) only he is loth to be at the labour. Negative godlineſs requires only a ſiting ſtill, and a forbearing to meddle with ſuch and ſuch things which God hath prohibited; but poſitive Godlineſs (if to any purpoſe) requires induſtry, and zeal, and activity, and the putting forth our ſtrength and ſpirits, which makes the idle Wretch take his leave of it. The ſlothful Servant could let his Talent lie ſtill in the Earth, and not lay it out in gaming and rioting, *&c.* and continue his ſlothfulneſs; but if he had improved it, in trading for his Maſters profit, he muſt have gone up and down, and taken pains.

It's eaſie to forbear curſing, and ſwearing, and blaſpheming the Name of God; theſe may ſuit well with a torpid idle perſon, but *to call on the Name of God, to pray fervently, to pray without ceaſing, to lift up to the Soul in prayer, to pour out*

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the heart, to ſtir up ones ſelf to wraſtle with God, to ſeek him with all the heart, with the whole heart; this will require ſome pains and labour, and this makes him forbear it. Again, it's no great pains for a man to keep himſelf from hearing laſcivious, vain, back-biting, or flattering, or evil Language; a man may but forbear coming into ſuch company, or depart from them, when he underſtandeth them about ſuch wickedneſs; but for a man to hear the Word of God, with *reverence*, as the Word of God; with *meekneſs*, as willing to be govern'd by it; with Faith, as believing all the Promiſes and Threatnings of it to be of unqueſtionable certainty, and with a reſolution to practiſe it, as knowing we ſhall be judged by it at the day of Chriſt; this will coſt ſome head and heart work, which the ſleepy Drone is unwilling to come to.

Again, the right performance of Duties in regard of the manner, requires much more pains than in regard of the matter; therefore they who take upon them a Form, deny the power of Godlineſs;

lineſs; and who are not guilty of external, are yet of internal Omiſſions. How many pray or mumble over a few words Morning and Evening to God, (and are pleaſed with it, as if therefore all were well, and think God pleaſed too,) who never trouble themſelves with minding that reverence, humility, uprightneſs, ſenſe of want, Faith in Chriſt, importunity of deſires which God expects in every prevalent Prayer; and the reaſon is, becauſe the former is ſo eaſie, and the latter ſo laborious.

Beſides, for a man to examine his own heart frequently and impartially, and to call himſelf to a ſtrict account what he hath been and done in the World, and what is like to become of him, and to befal him for ever; for him to take the Looking-Glaſs of the Law of God, and therein to behold his Heart and Life, and having compared his practices with the Divine Precepts, which are exceeding broad, to accuſe, and judge, and condemn, and loath, and abhor himſelf; for him to lay himſelf low before the Lord, and to acknowledge and confeſs with ſhame, and anger,

ger, and grief, his filthineſs and wickedneſs, and to beg Pardon & Grace, as earneſtly as one that believes, if his requeſts be denied, his poor Soul is damned for ever. Friend, Friend, this is hard and painful work, and the idle man will not meddle. Once more, he that will be poſitively holy, muſt watch himſelf in all his ways, muſt watch for opportunities of Service to God; he muſt catch at them, and improve them, when he hath them put into his hand; he muſt ſtand always upon his guard, to defend himſelf againſt his enemies; and be as a Sparrow upon the houſe-top, to look about and conſider where he may pick up any ſpiritual food for his Soul; he muſt deſign, and ſtudy, and contrive how he may ſpend his time, and parts, and ſtrength, and eſtate to the beſt advantage of his Lord and Maſter; and think nothing too much, no pains, no labour, no not his blood for his Lord's Honour; and will a ſluggard that lieth with his hands in his boſom do this, or any part of this? Ah Friend, the ſleepy World dream of Happineſs upon eaſie terms, as if they could walk to Heaven in a pleaſant Meadow, or be carried

carried to Heaven in a Down-bed; but it muſt not be, it cannot be; *Difficilia quæ pulchra.* Canſt thou obtain any thing that is excellent, unleſs thou art diligent? Doth the Tradeſman get an Eſtate, who is not induſtrious to look after his Cuſtomers, his Books, and whatſoever concerns his Calling? Can he who ſits ſtill in his Chimney-corner, and neither minds buying in, nor ſelling out; nor takes care how things are order'd in his Shop, ever exſpect to be rich? *Reader*, if ever thou wilt make any thing of it, there is a neceſſity of ſhaking off this ſlothfulneſs. I muſt tell thee, an idle perſon is the Devils Cuſhion, his own burden, unlike and loathſome to God, and a wem in the Body Politick where he lives. To cure this, *Reader*, I muſt ſay to thee, as the Apoſtle to the *Epheſians*, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, ariſe from the dead*, Epheſ. 5. 14. Friend, thy work is not to be done ſleeping; God-work, Soul-work, Eternity-work is not to be done ſleeping. Labouring, wraſtling, fighting, ſtriving, running, are not to be done ſleeping, *Joh. 6. 27. Gen. 32. 24. Matth. 6. 13.*

1 *Cor.*9. Doſt thou think to attain everlaſting Pleaſures, and not to take pains? Doth God value his bliſsful Manſions at ſo low a rate, as to throw them away upon thoſe who ſlight them, and judge them unworthy their utmoſt endeavours? Is the price of Heaven fallen ſince the Redeemers being in the World? then it was, *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God, and the Righteouſneſs thereof*, Matth. 6. 33. *And ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait Gate*, Matth. 7. 33. *And labour for the meat that endureth to everlaſting life*, Matth. 6. 27. And is it now laze and loyter, and be bleſſed for ever. Though God doth not exſpect from thee a natural price for his Son, that is impoſſible for Men or Angels to give; yet he doth exſpect that pactional price which he hath ſet down in his Word, as the condition of thoſe that ſhall have a part in him.

Reader, doſt thou know what pains the Merchant takes for corruptible Treaſures, how he ventures his life in a wooden-bottom, and a tempeſtuous Ocean, and is every moment in danger of death; how he ſails from Haven to Haven,

Haven, diſpoſing and exchanging Commodities, trading and trafficking with perſons of divers Countries and Languages, and all to get a little wealth; and if worldly Pearls cannot be had without pains, doſt thou think the Pearl of great and ineſtimable price, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the fruits of his precious blood may be had for nothing. I tell thee, as God valued his Son at ſo high a rate, as to accept of his temporary ſufferings as fuller ſatisfaction to his Juſtice on the behalf of millions of Souls; than if they had fryed millions of millions of millions of years in Hell; ſo God will make thee value and prize him, if ever thou partake any benefit by him. And if thou once comeſt to know his worth, and to eſteem him accordingly; thou wilt think no toil, no ſweat; nay, no blood too good or too much for him.

Friend, ponder the work of poſitive Godlineſs, and then judge whether diligence be not requiſite. Cloſet-Duties, as praying, reading, ſelf-examining, and Family-Duties muſt daily be performed, and that with life and vigor, and all the Soul, and all the ſtrength: Thy earthly

Calling muſt be followed with heavenly affections; and whilſt thy Occupation is amongſt men, thy Converſation muſt be with God. In all Companies, and at all Seaſons, and in all Conditions, thou art to be in the fear of God, and watchful over thy ſelf, that thou doſt nothing to diſpleaſe him, and ſolicitous how thou mayſt do that which is moſt pleaſing to him. Thou muſt love God with all thy heart, when he ſeems moſt angry with thee; and truſt in his goodneſs, when he inflicts never ſo great or ſo many evils on thee. Thy duty is to believe in a crucified Chriſt, and ſo venture thy Soul on the death of another, upon the bare warrant of Scripture; thou art required to deny, and bemoan, and abhor thy ſelf, as near and dear as thou art to thy ſelf, to mortifie thy earthly members, and to cut off thy right hand, and pluck out thy right eye. Not a Relation, not a Condition, not an Ordinance, not a Providence, but calls for Duties, ſuitable Duties to be performed, and not one of theſe Duties but calls for ſuitable Graces to be exerciſed. Beſides, ere theſe Duties can be performed, and

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theſe Graces exerciſed, many ſtrong and ſturdy luſts muſt be ſubdued; the allurements on one hand of a flattering, gaudy, giddy, ſkin-deep World, as Babies to pleaſe Children, trampled on; and its afrightments, as Cloths ſtuft with ſtraw, to ſcare Birds, muſt be deſpiſed. I, and all the Powers and Policies of Hell combated with, and conquered. And, Friend, can all this be done with thy hands in thy Pocket, or without pains. It's in vain to think of freedom from Omiſſions, whilſt thou lieſt on the bed of Security. Water corrupteth, and breeds venemous Creatures, whilſt it ſtandeth ſtill; it is preſerved ſweet by motion, as we experience in running-ſtreams. The unuſed Iron ruſteth, whilſt that which is uſed groweth daily more bright. Neither Nature nor Art will afford us any thing that is good without labour. The ground will not yield its fruit, unleſs the Huſbandman dung, and plow, and dreſs, and harrow it. Can any Artiſt make an excellent Clock, or Watch, or curious Veſſel without pains? And wilt thou preſume of Holineſs and Heaven with-

out it? The Heavens are ever in motion for the benefit of this lower World, and never ſtand ſtill but by a Miracle. The Earth is always labouring to bring forth fruit for our profit and delight, and never idle and barren, but as curſed of God for mans ſin. *Adam* in his eſtate of Innocency, was by God himſelf taught a Leſſon of Induſtry, and commanded to till the ground. Our bleſſed Saviour was not idle; but when he undertook the work of mans Redemption, went up and down doing good, denying himſelf his ſleep. A great while before day he was at prayer, *Mark* 1. and he prayed all night. He denied himſelf his Food when he was hungry, and diſappointed of Food at the Figg-Tree; he goeth not to an houſe to eat, but to the Synagogue to preach. He denied himſelf his eaſe and pleaſure, and all to follow his buſineſs, *Joh.* 9. 4. As he ſaid, ſo he did; *I muſt work the work of him that ſent me whilſt it is day.* And did Chriſt contend, and fight, and ſtrive, and wraſtle night and day before he was crown'd, or could enjoy the Joy ſet before him; and doſt thou think to have all for nothing? *Reader,*

Reader, to conclude this Head conſider, *Rom.* 12. 11. *Not ſlothful in buſineſs, fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord.* Where we have the Duty (I am perſwading thee to) commanded by the Apoſtle (in regard of its great weight, extraordinary difficulty, or backwardneſs to it,) both ways: 1. Negatively, not ſlothful in buſineſs; *i.e.* you will do nothing at it if ye be ſleepy or ſlothful; the buſineſs is not ſuch as may be done in a dream. As idleneſs is the burial of our perſons, ſo ſlothfulneſs is the burial of our actions. It's bad to be ſlow at our buſineſs, but much worſe to be ſlothful. 2. Affirmatively, *fervent in Spirit*; this is the greateſt diligence poſſible. Fervency is the heat and height of the Affections, and is as contrary to ſlothfulneſs as fire to water. When the powers and faculties of the Soul are wound up to their higheſt pitch in the Service of God; then a man may be ſaid *to be fervent in Spirit.* The labour of the body is nothing to the labour of the brains, and the ſweating of the outward man is little to the induſtry of the inward man. He that hath the heart of a man, may

command his purſe and hands, and what he hath. Fervency of Spirit, or intenſion of Mind about any buſineſs, will call in his time, and wealth, and ſtrength, and all to its aſſiſtance.

2. The Duty is urged by an high and weighty reaſon, ſerving the Lord. It's the Majeſty, Excellency, Purity, and boundleſs Perfection of the Object, which requires ſuch warmth, and life, and heat, and fervency of Spirit in thoſe that adore him. Though we may make bold with our fellow-duſt and aſhes, with thoſe that are of the ſame make and mould with our ſelves; yet the moſt High, *he whoſe Name alone is Excellent, the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh, to whom the whole Creation is leſs than nothing*; he is not to be made bold with. His immenſe Being and Perfections command the higheſt and the hotteſt affections. The greateſt Prince muſt not be put off with leſs than the greateſt Preſent.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIV.

Another cauſe of Omiſſions, is vain excuſes men have, that Omiſſions are little ſins, with the cure of it.

4. A Fourth cauſe of ſins of Omiſſion, is a Preſumption, or falſe Opinion that men have concerning them, and ſo they think to excuſe them.

1. That they are little ſins, and ſo not much to be minded.

2. That the performance of them would be unſeaſonable at this or that time, and ſo they are put off to another time that never comes.

3. That when they are called to the performance of this or that Duty, they neglect it with this excuſe, that it is but one Duty they live in the neglect of, or it can be no great matter for once to omit it. *Reader*, I ſhall handle theſe ſeverally, and ſhew firſt, that theſe fooliſh excuſes which men pleaſe themſelves with, do cauſe Omiſſions, and then direct to the cure of each ſeverally.

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1. The firſt excuſe is, that Omiſſions are ſmall ſins, and this Opinion is generally rooted in all men. Becauſe they do not fly in the face of Conſcience, diſturb the light of Reaſon, trouble the Societies where, and debauch the perſons amongſt whom we live, as ſome ſins of Commiſſion do; therefore thy fancy (for it is but a fancy) that they are light and little, and no great matter is to be made of them. When once a man hath ſuckt in this poyſonous Opinion, no wonder if his heart ſwell, and his life ſwarm with ſuch ſins. For when his Nature hath a reluctancy againſt the poſitive Precepts, (much more than againſt the negative) and his lazy temper ſets him farther off, and he believes that they are Peccadilloes, and little taken notice of by God; yea, that a pardon in the High Court of Heaven is allowed in courſe for ſuch ſmall offences; what ſhould hinder but he ſhould abound and continue in them to the end of his life, unleſs his judgment of them be alter'd.

In all our converſes and dealings, we are moſt careleſs about matters which we

we judge to be of ſmall concernment. For 'tis judged a part of folly to be very ſolicitous about toys and trifles. If I have a ſlight cut on my Finger, or my ſkin razed, I poſſibly let it go, and am nothing troubled about it; but if a bone be broken, or a vital part infected, I am not a little perplexed, and quickly apply the beſt means for the cure of it. The leſs I apprehend the danger to be, the leſs care I take to prevent it.

We ſee it by experience about the Laws of men, that thoſe Laws, the breach of which they preſume will be generally winked at, and little taken notice of by the Magiſtrate, (as relieving Beggars, and ſeveral others,) are ſeldom obſerved, and men at moſt are indifferent whether they keep them or no; but for thoſe Laws which they believe will be ſeverely reckon'd for, if men break them; as thoſe againſt Thefts, Murthers, Raviſhments, Treaſons, and the like; theſe they will be tender of, and take care leſt they ſhould incur their penalties. Truly, ſo it is about the Laws of God; we do uſually make

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ſome conſcience of thoſe Laws which we apprehend have Death, and Hell, and Wrath, and Damnation attending the breach of them; but thoſe Laws, the breach of which we preſume is no great matter, and little minded by God, we are careleſs and indifferent about.

To cure this, *Reader*, conſider theſe three or four particulars.

1. I grant, that there are degrees of Sin: All ſins are not of the ſame ſize, nor every Sinner of the ſame ſtature. All ordinary Births which Satan begets upon the hearts of men are not of the ſame bigneſs; yet ſometimes we find Monſters born. Some ſins are compared to Camels, others to Gnats, *Matth.* 23. 24. Some to Motes, others to Beams, *Matth.* 7. 3. Some to Talents, others to Farthings or Pence. Our Saviour tells us of a Creditor who had two Debtors, the one owed much more than the other, *Luke* 7. 41. So *Luke* 16. 5. Some ſins are pardonable, other ſins unpardonable, *Matth.* 12. 31. *Wherefore I ſay unto you, all manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven unto men, but the blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall not be for-*

forgiven unto men. The *Stoicks* (as *Tully* obſerves in his Paradoxes, and the *Jovinians*, as St. *Hierom* teſtifieth in his Second Book againſt them, ſided with them,) held, That all ſins were equal, becauſe all ſins are aberrations from the rule, and a going beyond the bounds; but it is to be conſidered that ſome may wander farther from their rule, and out of their way than others. Some may ſhoot wider than others, though both miſs the mark. *Epiſt. 28. cap. 1.*

A ſin againſt the Firſt Table, *cæteris paribus*, is greater than a ſin againſt the Second, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. as being more immediately againſt God. Whereas all ſin hath its ſinfulneſs from its oppoſition and offenſiveneſs to ſo infinite a Majeſty, *Pſal.* 51. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned.* Thus we read that Witch-craft and Idolatry, which directly diſown God as the greateſt ſins, 1 *Sam.* 15. 13. And our Lord Jeſus, when aſked what was the firſt and great Commandment, anſwers, *To love the Lord our God with all our hearts*, &c. *Matth.* 22. 11. Spiritual ſins are greater than bodily ſins; 1. As thoſe by which we moſt imitate the Devil,

Devil, who is for ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places, *Epheſ.* 6. All ſin is from Satan *per modum ſervitutis*; but theſe ſins *per modum imaginis.* 2. As thoſe ſins by which we moſt directly oppoſe God, who is a Spirit, *Joh.* 4. 24. and therefore God moſt directly ſets himſelf in battel-array againſt them. 3. As thoſe ſins that defile and pollute moſt the chiefeſt part of man, his ſpirit, in which regard the Apoſtle calls them *filthineſs of ſpirit*; and diſtinguiſheth them from the *filthineſs of the fleſh*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. 4. As thoſe ſins which are the ſpring of all bodily and outward ſins; *Out of the heart proceed Murders, Blaſphemies, Theſts*, &c. *Matth.* 15. 19. 5. As thoſe ſins have more of the heart and ſpirit in them; the malignity of ſin, in regard of its Object, is from the immenſity of that God againſt whom it is committed; in regard of its Subject, it's from the degree of that heartineſs and willingneſs with which it is committed. To back-ſlide in heart, is more than back-ſlide from God with our tongues, and deny him vocally, *Prov.* 14. 14. *Such a one ſhall be filled with his own ways and wickedneſs.*

kedneſs. To err in heart, is the provocation indeed, *Heb.* 3. 10. To err in heart is much worſe than to err in our heads; the more of the heart and ſpirit in any Service, the more lovely and acceptable to God; the more of the heart and ſpirit in any ſin, the more loathſome and abominable to God. 6. As thoſe ſins which have their full ſcope and ſwing. In bodily ſins a man is curbed, as in Uncleanneſs, by the weakneſs or wearineſs of his Body; in Prodigality, and Luxury, and Pride, by the weakneſs of his Eſtate; in Murder, by his Antagoniſt's ſtrength, or his fear of the Law, or want of opportunity: But ſpiritual ſins have none of theſe obſtacles or hinderances. He whoſe Body is ſo weak, that he cannot know one Woman, may yet in his Spirit defile hundreds in one day. He whoſe Eſtate is ſo ſmall, that he can ſcarce maintain himſelf, will yet in his thoughts keep a Table for a Prince, throw away hundreds upon proviſion for the Fleſh, and be as great an Emperour as he pleaſeth. He whoſe ſickneſs, and lowneſs of quality, and want of a convenient ſeaſon, hindreth him

him from doing his Neighbour the leaſt actual injury, may yet in his Spirit ſlay more than *Sampſon* did with the jaw-bone of an Aſs in a much leſs time.

Sins againſt Knowledge are greater than ſins of Ignorance. Our Saviour tells the *Jews*, *That if they had been blind, they had had no ſin; but becauſe ye ſay ye ſee, therefore your ſin remaineth*, Joh. 9. Sins againſt knowledge are ſins againſt our own light, and thereby we offer violence to our ſelves, *Rom.* 1. 21, *to* 28. 2. More daring to God; for he who is ignorant of his Maſters will, cannot do any thing, or omit any thing to dare him or to provoke him, becauſe he doth not know what is diſpleaſiug to him; but he who knoweth what God would have, and omits what he commandeth, or doth what he forbids, may rather be ſuppoſed to commit the one or omit the other, becauſe of his enmity to God. 3. As more againſt the mercy of God. Knowledge is a great mercy: *The Underſtanding of Man is the Candle of the Lord.* And ſins againſt it are therefore the more provoking, becauſe againſt the Divine goodneſs, *Joh.* 15. 4. Theſe ſins againſt

againſt knowledge make way for the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, *Matth.* 12. 32. *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6. Sins againſt the Goſpel are greater than ſins againſt the Law. Thoſe ſins are againſt the natural Law, the moral, and the Law of Faith, *Rom.* 3. 27. and are committed in the face of the Sun, as they are againſt the cleareſt Light, ſo they are againſt the ſweeteſt Love, and therefore the more ſinful. A Taper in the hand of a Ghoſt makes it look the more gaſtly; *This is the condemnation*, Joh. 3. 19.

Sins repeated and reiterated, are much greater than ſins once committed: Hereby the habit of Sin is ſtrengthened; frequent acts root the habits. Hereby the long-ſuffering of God is abuſed; for the more patient he is, the more he is provoked, *Rom.* 2. 4. As in Numbers, one in the firſt place ſtands but for a ſingle one, in the ſecond place ten, in the third place for an hundred, the fourth place for a thouſand; ſo here, each Repetition is a great aggravation; *Prov.* 29. 1. *He that being often reproved, hardneth his heart, ſhall be* (ſee the grievouſneſs of his puniſhment, not afflicted, but) *deſtroyed*

(the quickneſs of it) *ſpeedily*, (and the irrecoverableneſs of it) and that without remedy. It's one thing to fall into the water, another thing to lie there; 'tis the latter that drowns men.

The Sins of the people of God are greater reſpectively than the Sins of others; therefore they are ſaid *only to do evil*, as if all the World beſide were innocent, *Jer.* 32. *The Children of* Iſrael *and the Children of* Judah *have only done evil before me.* 1. As theſe Sins are committed againſt the greateſt Obligations on Gods part, againſt the electing, calling, pardoning, adopting, ſaving-love, each of theſe is an aggravation of Sin. God accents *Iſraels* Sin from his ſpecial kindneſs, *Hoſ.* 11. 1. Although I was an Huſband to them. 2. As they are committed againſt the moſt ſolemn ingagements on our part. Every of Gods people doth expreſly before God, Angels, and Men, promiſe and covenant to be the Lords, wholly, univerſally, and eternally the Lords. The *Iſraelites* avouched God to be theirs. And *David* ſwore that he would be Gods obedient ſervant, *Pſal.* 119. *I have ſworn, and I will*

Deut. 32. 6

will perform, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments. And it's no mean Sin to be guilty of Perjury. God aggravates the Sin of his people by this, *They all like men have tranſgreſſed the Covenant.* 3. As theſe Sins are committed againſt the greateſt helps to Obedience; An enlightned Mind, a renewed Will, ſanctified Affections, an awakned Conſcience, and a principle of Life or new Nature, are all oppoſed and reſiſted by their Diſobedience. This cut the heart of *David*, that God made him to know Wiſdom ſecretly, *Pſal.* 51. 6. 4. As the Sins of theſe men cauſe God to be more blaſphemed and diſhonoured than the Sins of others, *Levit.* 22. 31. *Nathan* tells *David*, *By this deed thou haſt given great occaſion to the enemies of God to blaſpheme*, 2 Sam. 12. 14. Indeed, theſe by falling into ſin after their Repentance, ſeem to repent of their Repentance, and to lick up their Vomit.

Sins of Omiſſion may be greater in reſpect of the perſon committing them, a Believer, in regard of the means the Offender enjoyeth. The Word of the Divine Grace, in regard of the matter

he omits, the Duties of the Goſpel, and in many other reſpects than Sins of Commiſſions in others, who have not ſuch circumſtances.

It is very evident, and cannot be denied, that Sins are unequal; for though Original Sin, as the Logicians ſay of *Subſtantia*, be not capable of *magis & minus*, of intenſion or remiſſion, of aggravation or diminution; yet actual ſins are like qualities and quantities which receive more or leſs addition or ſubſtraction, and have their Latitude and Degrees. For this cauſe under the Law there were diverſity of Sacrifices for diverſity of Sin, *Levit.* 4.

2. I anſwer, that no ſins are little ſimply: Though there is a difference of ſins conſider'd comparatively, and ſo ſins may be ſaid to be little, if compared with thoſe that are more hainous; yet no ſins abſolutely conſider'd are little. The leaſt Sin reſembleth the Earth, which though but a point to the Heavens, yet is a vaſt immeaſurable Body in it ſelf.

1. Becauſe all ſins are againſt a great and infinite Majeſty. *Reader*, it's the excellency of the Perſon whoſe Authority

rity is contemned, and Commands violated, and whoſe Name is diſhonoured by ſin that gives ſin its name, ſpeaks its hainous Nature, and is the higheſt aggravation of it, *Numb.* 32. 23. and this is done in all Sins. Friend, till thou canſt hear of a little God contemned, abuſed, diſgraced, and reſiſted by Sin, ſpeak no more of little ſins in excuſe for thy allowance of them, *Zach.* 1. 5.

2. Becauſe the price paid to make ſatisfaction for all ſins of what ſize or ſort ſoever, was a great price. It is the blood, the precious blood of the Son of God, and that only that can waſh away the leaſt Sin, 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. *Aaron* muſt offer Sacrifice for pollution in a mans dream, that he never thought of poſſibly but in ſleep. And for the Sins which the *Jews* committed ignorantly, not underſtanding them to be any offence to God; and in anſwer to thoſe Types our Redeemer is ſaid to die for the ignorance, the errors of the people. *Reader*, till that thou canſt tell of a Sin ſo little, that ſomewhat leſs than the death of him who was God will ſatisfie for it, call no Sin little. Liv. 5. 17, 18.

3. Becauſe no little puniſhment is the due and deſert of every Sin. *The wages of Sin is Death*, and Hell, and infinite Wrath of an Almighty God; and therefore its the wages of every Sin, *Rom. 6. ult. A quatenus ad omne valet conſequentia.* Becauſe fire as fire burns, therefore every fire burns; becauſe Sin as Sin damneth, therefore every Sin damneth. So that all Sins bring greater intollerable eternal Sufferings. Endleſs baniſhment from the bliſsful preſence of God and Chriſt, everlaſting burnings amongſt Devils and damned Ones, is the deſert of every Sin. *Reader*, when thou canſt tell of a little Fire, and little Torments in Hell, and little horrors and terrors of Soul, there to be the fruit of Sin: Call not any of thy ſins little. Another thing, *Reader*, I would advertiſe thee of; No Sin is little to him who thinks it ſo. Sins may be ſaid to be mortal or venial: 1. In reſpect of their own Nature, and ſo no Sins are venial; but the leaſt is mortal. 2. In reſpect of the Divine Favour. 3. In regard of the Iſſue. In the two laſt reſpects, all the ſins of ſuch as believe and repent are venial; not

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in the Popiſh ſenſe, ſo as to be in their own nature no tranſgreſſions, but præter-tranſgreſſions of the Divine Law, and not properly ſins, but analogically, but they are venial, as God for Chriſt's ſake doth forgive them. Either thoſe Sins which they term venial, are forbidden by the Law of God or not; if not, they are no Sins, or the Law of God is imperfect; if they be forbidden, they are mortal. *For curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the Book of the Law to do it*, Gal. 3. 10.

3. I anſwer, ſuppoſe Sins of Omiſſion were little, yet it is folly and madneſs upon this to allow of them. A mote in the eye is a little thing, it hindereth our ſight of the Sun, and is big enough to put us to great pain, and to diſturb our whole Body. The Flies and Lice of *Egypt* were little Creatures, but great Plagues. The ſting of a Bee is a little thing, but it puts us to grievous torment. He who refuſed to give a few crumbs, was denied one drop, *Luke* 16. 21. A flie ſpoils an Alablaſter Box of Oyntment; a little poyſon ſpoils much wholſome Liqour.

1. If they were little, yet they are Sins, and that enough to ſet a good man againſt them. It's as much Treaſon to Coin a peny, as a twenty ſhillings piece; becauſe the Royal Authority is as much violated in the one as in the other. There is the ſame rotundity in a little Ball or Bullet, as in a great one. The Authority of God is as truly deſpiſed in the breach of the leaſt Commandments, as ſome are called, as in the breach of the greateſt, as others are called, *Matth.* 22. 36, 37. A ſprig of Wormwood hath the ſame bitterneſs with the Plant. A drop of Sea-water hath the ſame ſaltneſs with the Ocean. The ſmalleſt Sin is a breach of the Royal Law as well as the greateſt, 1 *Joh.* 3. 4. Though the Object may be different, yet the Command is ſtill the ſame. And the wiſe man tells us, That the Law muſt be kept as the apple of the Eye, which is offended by the ſmalleſt duſt, *Prov.* 7. 2. The brats of *Babylon* muſt be daſhed againſt the Wall, as the ſtrongeſt men muſt be deſtoyed.

It's worth the while to obſerve in Scripture how leſſer Sins (being of the ſame

ſame nature) have given to them the names of the greater. Malice is called *Murder*, luſtful looks *Adultery*, ſitting at Idolatrous Feaſts (though which no thought of worſhipping the Idol) *Idolatry*, *Job* 31. 27, 28.

This is argument enough againſt the ſmalleſt Sin, that it is a Sin. As the Will of God is the higheſt motive to Obedience, ſo alſo againſt Diſobedience. All Sin, as Sin, affronts the Divine Dominion, as if he had not Authority to command us; and to the Divine Wiſdom, as if God did not know what were fit for us to do, and to forbear; and to the Divine Grace, as if he had no reſpect to our good in his Precepts; and is not this ſufficient reaſon for our hatred of it, and watchfulneſs againſt it?

Reader, I know thou wouldſt not venture upon a ſpoonful of Poyſon, but wouldſt conſider its of the ſame nature with a pint or a quart; and why wilt thou venture on any Sin, be it never ſo little in thine eye, when it is of the ſame nature, a tranſgreſſion of the ſame Law, a contempt of the ſame Lord with the greateſt. It is Murder to ſtifle an Infant in

in the Womb, as well as to kill a grown perſon.

Reader, whatſoever hath the nature of Sin, muſt be the Object of thy hatred, let it be comparatively little or great.

2. Theſe little ſins (if they be ſo) will make way for greater. Little wedges open the way in the moſt knotty wood for bigger. As Thieves, when they go to rob an Houſe, if they cannot force open the doors, or break through the Walls, let in a little Boy at the window, who unbolts and unlocks the door, and ſo lets in the whole Rabble. Thus the Devil, when men ſtartle at greater ſins, and by them he hath no hopes to get poſſeſſion of their Souls, he puts them upon thoſe ſins which they think little, and by theſe inſenſibly enters; for they once admitted, open the doors of the Eyes, of the Ears, and of the Heart too, whereby the whole Legion enter, and rule and domineer in their Souls to their ruine. Men do not, indeed they cannot imagine the woful conſequences of neglecting their watch againſt the leaſt Sin. How many who have been ſo modeſt and maidenly at firſt,

firſt, that they would not ſo much as give a laſcivious perſon the hearing, when he hath ſpoken wantonly; yet by giving way to their own fooliſh thoughts, have at laſt proſtituted themſelves to their pleaſure without any ſhame. Sinners increaſe to more ungodlineſs, when they once venture down hill, they know not where nor when to ſtop. Work-men bore holes with little Wimbles, which make way for the driving of great Nails.

When *Pompey*, ſaith *Plutarch*, could not prevail with a City to billet his Army, he yet perſwaded them to take in a few weak maimed Souldiers; but thoſe ſoon recovered ſtrength, and let in the whole Army, to command and govern the City. Thus Satan by ſins of Infirmity prevails at length for ſins of Preſumption. Great ſtorms ariſe out of little guſts; and Clouds no bigger than the palm of a mans hand, comes in time to cover the whole Heavens. The greateſt River is fed with drops, and the biggeſt Mountain made up of atomes. As *Sylla* ſaid, when (in his Proſcription time, that he ſlew ſo many) one pleaded

ded for the life of *Cæſar*, *In uno Cæſare multi Marii.* In one little Youth, many old ſubtle men; ſo in one little Sin, there may be many great ones. When one evil Spirit hath got lodging in the Heart, he prepares it, and makes room for ſeven more wicked and worſe than himſelf.

Keepers firſt ply their Deer with little Beagles till it be heated and blown, and then they put on their great Buck-Hounds. So the Devil firſt plies us with little ſins, afterwards when we are uſed to them with greater. One circle made with a ſtone in the water, makes way for a ſecond greater than it, the ſecond for a third greater than that, *&c.* Rivers (far from their Springs) grow as they go along greater and greater, and enlarge their Chanels, till at laſt they empty themſelves into the Ocean. Thus Sin incroacheth by degrees upon the Soul, if it can get but one of its claws into us, it will quickly follow with its head and whole body. *A little Leaven leaveneth the whole lump.* Unfaithfulneſs to God is firſt diſcovered in the ſmalleſt matters, then it proceeds to greater things.

things. As the decay of a Tree is firſt viſible in its twigs, but by degrees it goeth on the bigger Arms, and from them to the main body.

As it is the nature of a Cancer or Gangreen to run from one Joynt or part of the Body to another, from the Toe to the Foot, from the Foot to the Leg, from the Leg to the Thigh, and thence to the vital parts. Do we not ſometimes ſee a whole Arm impoſthumated with the prick of a little Finger, and have we not ſometimes heard of a great City betray'd, by the opening of a little Poſtern. Theſe little ſins will grow to great ones, if let alone. Time will turn ſmall duſt into ſtone. The poyſonous Cockatrice at firſt was but an Egg. Small Twigs will prove thorny Buſhes, if not timely ſtubbed up.

General Norris received a ſlight wound in the Iriſh wars, which he neglected, whereupon his Arm gangren'd, and both Arm and Life were loſt together.

3. The leaſt ſin is damnable. The ſmalleſt bit of ſin is a murthering morſel, *Deut.* 27. 26. *Curſed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this Law to do them.* To eat a little Leaven ſeems a ſmall thing, yet it's a cutting off from *Iſrael*, *Exod.* 12. 19. Gathering a few ſticks on a Sabbath, looking into the Ark; nay, touching

touching the Ark, are all puniſhed with death.

It's obſervable how God urgeth the Command to abſtain from blood (which ſeems a ſmall matter) with this argument; as they deſire God to do any good for them or theirs, *Deut.* 12. 22, 23, 24. and upon pain of death. Friend, a little thing, a prick of a thorn feſtring, the kernel of a Raiſin, a ſmall bone in thy Throat may deprive thee of thy natural life; and theſe little ſins, as thou calleſt them, may hinder thee of eternal life. A ſmall leak in a Ship unſtopt, may ſink it. A dram of poyſon diffuſeth it ſelf to all parts, till it ſeize and ſtrangle the vital Spirits. A Pen-knife will ſtab mortally, and kill a man as ſurely as a Sword. A Piſtol will kill as dead as a Cannon. *Cæſar* was ſlain, as ſome report, with Bodkins. There are other Diſeaſes mortal beſide the Plague. Some have been eaten up by Bears and Lions, others by Mice and Lice. It's ſpiritual Murder to ſtifle and ſuppreſs the Conceptions of the Spirit in thy Soul, as well as to do open deſpight to the Holy Ghoſt.

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The *Rabbies* reckon'd up 613 Commandments of the Law, and diſtinguiſhed them into greater and leſſer; the leſſer they judged might be neglected with little or no guilt, but what Scripture makes deadly, men muſt not make indifferent. Gods thoughts are not as their thoughts in this particular, *Ezek.* 18. 3. *The Soul that ſins ſhall die*, without a diſtinction. Thou mayſt ſay of Sin, as *Lot* of *Zoar*, *It is but a little one, and my Soul ſhall live*; when thou haſt much more cauſe to ſay as *Jonathan*, *Behold I have taſted but a little honey, and I muſt die*, 1 Sam. 14. 43. I have been guilty of a little Sin, and without Repentance, I muſt die eternally for it. A little ſpark may kindle ſuch a fire as may burn down a whole City.

4. How little ſoever they ſhould be in their own nature, they become great by thy allowance. The nature of Sin ſtands not ſo much in the material part of it, which is often little, but principally in the form or anomy, which is the breach of Gods Law, and alſo in the manner or carriage of the heart in its Commiſſion. A Sin may be great *in abſtracto*,

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as the fact is measured by the Law, and as the matter of it may be, and yet small *in concreto*; and by circumstances as not allowed of, or domineering in the Soul. On the other side, a Sin may be small, as measured by the Law, or according to the nature of the fact; and yet great by circumstances, as liked and approved by us. In a Corporation, a man of a great Estate and Quality may be an inferior and underling in point of Authority and Sway; and one that is of small Estate or Degree may be chief Governour. Sick Bodies love to be gratified with some little bit which they love, though it never so much favour their Disease. As some Favours we receive from God are little in their kind, but great in their circumstances, and so very ingaging to the Creature; as to have a little Food sent in, when a man is starving, *&c.* So there are some Sins which may be small in their nature, but by the time when, or wilfulness of the Sinner, may be very great. For a man to commit a Sin materially greater, is not so great a Sin as to commit a lesser with deliberation. To commit actual Adul-

Adultery out of ignorance, or for want of advice, is not ſo great a Sin, as for a man to be guilty of adulterous thoughts with allowance, and adviſedly. *Reader*, take heed of this, for thou wilt find at laſt that it will be an hard thing to give them comfort, who ſin with counſel, though in ſmall matters. A ſin little in its nature, the more it's allowed, and the more wilfully committed, the greater it is; nay, it may be much greater than Sins materially greater; if theſe be not committed *plena voluntate*, with a full conſent of will. As a little ſtone thrown with a ſtrong Arm will do more harm than a much greater ſtone thrown with a weak Arm. So a little Sin committed with ſecurity, deliberation, and allowance, will more waſt the Conſcience, and wound the Soul, than far greater out of infirmity and inadvertency. Petty Princes uſually prove the cruelleſt Tyrants, and do the moſt miſchief to their Subjects. Friend, doſt thou not conſider where ever Sin reigneth, it is horrid hainous, moſt defiling and damning; and thy little Sins may reign as well as great ones.

There have been Kings of Countries, (as here in *England* in the time of the Heptarchy) nay, of Cities among the *Grecians*, as well as Emperors of vast and large Dominions. There are Mayors and Constables commanding in chief in their places, as well as Justices and Judges. A little hair hanging in the pen may make a great blot, and thy little Sins allowed, will very greatly defile and wound thy Soul. In this sense, what the Philosopher saith is true, Ἀδικήματα ἐλάχιστα, are μεγίστα, the smallest errors prove most dangerous, *Arist. Polit. lib.* 5. *cap.* 8.

5. The baser and unworthier art thou to fall out with thy best Friend for a little small matter. Ah, how great is thy ingratitude to disobey, and provoke, and displease, and dishonour the blessed God, to whom thou art so infinitely obliged for a poor small business? And what folly and madness is it to forfeit the Divine Favour, and incur his Anger, and to expose thy self to infinite torments for a trifle, a bable, a light, little, inconsiderable thing. God aggravates the Sin of the *Jews*, and threatneth them severely

ſeverely for it, *Amos* 2. 6. *That they ſold the poor for a pair of ſhooes*; that they ſold what was of ſo great value, his people for a pair of ſhooes, ſo poor and mean a price. Friend, how will he deal with thee, if thou ſelleſt thy own Soul and eternal ſalvation, the blood of thy Saviour, the love of thy Father, and all the joys and delights of the other World, for a pair of ſhooes; for that which thou thy ſelf acknowledgeſt is but a ſmall and little matter. Truly, the leſs the thing, the greater thy contempt in denying to do it. Ah, who will ſtand with his God for a tittle, for a ſmall matter? Truly, the leſs the matter is, the greater is the malice that will offend and provoke God for it. How great is the unkindneſs to ſtand with God for a trifle? How little doſt thou eſteem thy God, the God of all Conſolation? how little doſt value his Love and Grace, and Favour, and endleſs fruition, to part with all for little or nothing?

The leſs, *Reader*, the thing is for or about which thou ſinneſt, the greater is thy Sin. Believe it, that by which thou wouldſt excuſe thy ſin doth increaſe it. It

hath been formerly ſaid, *If a man will break his faith, it ſhould be for a Kingdom*, for ſomething of worth; yet this Sinner were a loſer, though by breaking his Faith, he could gain the whole Earth; what then is that man who will lye and forſwear himſelf for a peny. Though no man ſhould preſume upon Sin, becauſe its preſent profit will be great; yet there is more unkindneſs, more folly, and more ſinfulneſs in ſinning for a little. Some like Eagles, will not ſtoop at flies, ſcorn to ſin for a ſmall matter; others as Ants will be buſie about the leaſt duſt, will break the Law for a very little; the former are bad, the latter worſe.

6. The leſs they are, the more they call for thy care and caution; for they are the harder to be cured. As a wound made with a Bodkin, if deep, is hardlier cured than a wound with a Sword, becauſe the Orifice is ſo ſmall, and preſently almoſt cloſeth up, and ſo the wound bleedeth inwardly, often to the death of the Patient. It's much more difficult for the Mariner to avoid Quick-ſands, that are hurried hither and thi-

ther

ther, then known Rocks, though Sands are ſmall things, and Rocks are great vaſt bodies. Beſides our proneneſs to deſpiſe and ſlight them, cauſeth our more frequent falling into them, as alſo our lying longer in them without repentance.

7. Small Sins are not expiated without infinite ſatisfaction, and muſt they then be dallied with? there is more malignity in the leaſt ſin, than the whole Creation can expel; and more Venome than Men & Angels can antidote againſt. Friend, conſider it, thou ſayſt they are little ſins, therefore I may live in them. Did Chriſt die for them, and wilt thou live in them? Doſt thou not know what prodigious drops of ſweat, what clods of blood, what ſtrong cries, and groans, and prayers, the leaſt Sins coſt thy Redeemer? Doſt thou not know that their weight was ſo heavy (as little and light as thou fancieſt them to be) that they preſſed and bruiſed his bleſſed Body, that they oppreſſed and amazed his bleſſed Soul; yea, that they made him, who is valour and courage it ſelf, obedience and dutifulneſs it ſelf,

love and pity it self, to shrink and draw back, and pray against his Duty to his Father, and his own Mercy to fallen man, and decline the very end and errand for which he came into the world. *Reader*, think of it. As *Austin* saith, what matters it whether a Ship be overwhelmed with one great Wave, or sink by a small Cranny in the bottom, whereat the water enters drop by drop. And else-where, what caseth it a man to be pressed to death with an heap of small sand, more than with a sow of lead; or to be strangled with a pack-thread rather than with an halter.

Reader, I would not have thee think any of thy sins little. It's unbecoming a Christian to entertain such a thought of his sins; nay, it greatens his sin, for him to presume it is little. As we should not lessen the Mercies of God, but always think them great, and too great for us, and our selves less than the very least of them; so we should never lessen our sins, but judge the least of them great, and the lightest of them heavy, and every of them too great and too heavy for us to bear: and upon these

accounts

accounts loath and leave them. Friend, think of what I have ſaid of little ſins, and certainly thou wilt be of another mind than to allow of them, becauſe they are little; and rather reject them, becauſe they are ſins. Is there any thing that God hates but ſin, and muſt that be the Object of his hatred? Is there any thing that offends God, or grieves his Spirit, but ſin, and will nothing delight and pleaſe thee, but what provokes and diſpleaſeth him?

4. I anſwer, that Omiſſions are not little ſins. I have already largely proved, that in ſome reſpects, and as they may be circumſtantiated, they may be much greater ſins than ſins of Commiſſion. *Reader*, conſider what is written in the danger of ſins of Omiſſion before the Uſes, and then judge whether they are little ſins or no.

Are they little ſins which do moſt oppoſe the Mind and Will of God, which make way for whole herds of Sins of Commiſſion, and which do exceedingly grieve the good Spirit of God? Are thoſe little ſins which God complains of ſo frequently; threatneth ſo ſeverely,

and puniſheth with ſuch dreadful Judgments; on their Bodies, on their Souls, in this World, on both eternally, in the other World without any remedy? But, Friend, conſider farther;

1. Can that ſin be little which denieth God the higheſt Honour, and greateſt Homage, and chiefeſt Reſpect which the Creature oweth to him? What is that which is the choiceſt Jewel in the Crown of his Glory? whence do the greateſt Revenews of his Honour flow? Are not our higheſt eſteem, our hotteſt love, or ſtrongeſt truſt, and our moſt reverential awe of his ſacred Majeſty, the beſt and the moſt we can give him; and can the omiſſion of theſe be a little ſin? The forbearance of Commiſſions is but the ſkirt, and garment, and out-ſide of that Obedience which we owe to God; it is the giving up our hearts and ſouls to him, in our moſt enlarged deſires after him, and ſpiritual delights in him, and ſuperlative valuation of him, which he requireth of us, and principally looks after, *Micah* 6. 8. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly,*

juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. Surely, if any ſin be little, it's that which incroacheth leaſt upon the honour of God, not that which injures ſo greatly his Royal Prerogative. He that robs his Soveraign of ſome petty goods, cannot be ſo great a Tranſgreſſor as he who would rob him of his Crown and Kingdom.

2. Is that a little ſin which provoketh God to inflict the greateſt puniſhment: Either we muſt believe that God puniſheth men more or leſs, according to the nature of their offences, whether greater or leſſer, or elſe we muſt accuſe him of injuſtice. The Apoſtle undertakes to prove him righteous, *becauſe he renders to every man according to his works*, *Rom.* 2. 5, 6. If ſo, where he inflicts the greateſt Judgment, there muſt be the greateſt ſin. Now all Divines conclude, the puniſhment of loſs, which they ſay is for our Omiſſions, to be far greater than the puniſhment of ſenſe, which is for our Commiſſions. It's the general aſſertion, That departing from God, and all good for ever, will vex and torture the Soul, more than the flames of Hell

can pain and torment the Body. Therefore it is obſervable, that our Saviour ſometimes ſpeaks as if all the miſery of the damned were privative, and did conſiſt in their baniſhment from him. Then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you. *Depart from me ye workers of Iniquity*, Matth. 7. 23. This is all. *Pœna damni pœnalior eſt quam pœna ſenſus*, Chriſ. As the Sinner hath neglected to do good. They have left off to be wiſe, and to do good. So he ſhall be baniſhed from all good, and that for ever. The Omiſſion of good was his Sin, and the amiſſion of good ſhall be his puniſhment. As he delighted not in bleſſing, ſo it ſhall be far from him. Ah how far will that be from the poor Creature, which ſhall never never come to him. Friend, If the pain of loſs be greater than that of ſenſe, (for which cauſe in Scriptures, and Fathers, Hell-torments are called damnation,) and this pain of loſs be the puniſhment of thy Omiſſions, then it muſt needs follow, that Omiſſions are greater Sins than Commiſſions, and for that cauſe more ſeverely plagued by God. The preſence of

of God is the Heaven of Heaven, *Psal.* 16. *ult.* *In thy presence is fulness of joy*; and the loss of God is the Hell of Hell, *They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord*, 2 *Thess.* 1. 9. Which loss is the fruit of Omissions, and therefore, *Reader*, do not presume them little.

3. Is that Sin little which Christ could not satisfie for, without his observation of the whole Law. There was requisite that Christ might be a compleat Saviour, both active and passive Obedience, His active answers our Omissions or Sins against the Precept; what was neglected by us, was performed by him; and his passive answers our Commissions or Sins against the prohibition; because we do much evil, he suffer'd much evil. Now though we think this was a small part of his Humiliation, yet upon serious consideration we shall find it otherwise. For him that was the great Law-Maker, to become the Law-Observer; For him that was above all Law, to be made under the Law, is a condescention indeed. Therefore the Apostle speaks of the Love of God to be the greater,

be-

because *he sent his Son made under the Law.* As the Son of God, the infinite absolute Lord of all, and Law-Maker to all, he might have pleaded exemption from the Law; though the humane Nature, as a Creature, considered separately from the Divine, was obliged to the observation of the Law; yet being in conjunction with the Deity, and making one Person with the Son of God, it was priviledged as to keeping the Law; but he humbled himself to do it, that he might satisfie the Divine Justice for our Omissions. Indeed, it is no disparagement to men, no not to Angels, to be subject to the Law of God. It is as essential to them as their dependance is, by virtue of their Creaturelhip; but it was a great Humiliation in Christ to be bound to that Law of which he was Lord, especially if we consider these two things:

1. That he must be Man, before he could be made subject to the Law. For as God, he was altogether above it. As the Apostle saith, *He was made of a Woman, made under the Law, Gal.* 4. 4. His Incarnation was the first, and greatest, and

and loweſt ſtep of his Humiliation. It was not ſo great a marvail, nor ſo great a ſuffering for Chriſt, being man, to die, as for the *Son of God to become man*; he emptied himſelf, *and made himſelf of no reputation, when he was made in the likeneſs of man*, *Phil.* 2. 6. For God to become man, was an emptying himſelf of his Credit, and ſtripping himſelf of his Robes of Glory, and is the firſt *ænigma* in the Apoſtles *myſtery of Godlineſs*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16.

2. He was bound to perfect perſonal Obedience upon pain of the Laws curſe. I mean not on pain of bearing the Laws curſe as he did, notwithſtanding his perfect Obedience for others, but for himſelf. He was under the ſame Covenant with God, in regard of himſelf, that the firſt *Adam* was, and if he had failed in Obedience, as *Adam* did, his Humane Nature had been ſeparated from the Divine, and had periſhed withall in him for ever. That Covenant under which the Redeemer was for himſelf, had no grains of allowance for the leaſt infirmity, nor would admit of Repentance for the ſmalleſt defect or offence; ſo that

that if he had ſwerved the leaſt from the Law, he had been uncapable of ſuffering and ſatisfying for others, *Heb.* 7. 2. *ult.* and alſo had disjoyned the Humane Nature from the Divine, (which could not continue in Conjunction with a ſinful manhood,) and his Humane Nature with all he undertook for, muſt have born the curſe of the Law for ever. *Reader*, is that little, which coſt Chriſt ſo much to ſatisfie for? Was it eaſie to fulfil all Righteouſneſs, to obey all the rigid Exceptions of the Law to the utmoſt, to anſwer all its demands which was ſtill crying for work, yet afforded no help, neither allowed the leaſt mercy in caſe of failing. I hope thou wilt not hereafter live in any Omiſſion, upon preſumption that it is but a little ſin, when it intrencheth ſo greatly upon the Divine Prerogative, hath the greateſt puniſhment inflicted on it in the other World, and brought *the Son of God to be made of a Woman, and ſo to be made under the Law here*, that he might ſatisfie for it: For if after all this thou ſhould continue in it, I muſt ſay to thee, as *Saul* to *Jonathan*, with ſome alteration,

Know-

Knoweſt thou not that thou haſt choſen, this Son of the Devil to thy own confuſion, 1 Sam. 20. 30.

CHAP. XLV.

Another excuſe for ſins of Omiſſion (which is a cauſe of them) that they would be unſeaſonable, and ſo are deferred to that time which never comes, with the anſwer to it.

2. A Second excuſe that men have for their Omiſſions, is the unſeaſonableneſs of the performance of their Duties. They grant, that they ought to perform them, that God requires it of them, and they muſt be done; but the preſent time is very inconvenient, other affairs now call for their preſence, and an another time they may be done with more advantage. So the *Jews* ſerved God about building his Houſe, *Hag.* 1. 2. They acknowledged it was very fit that Gods Houſe ſhould be re-edified, and very ſad that his Houſe ſhould lie waſt, whilſt their own were

were ceiled, but the time was not yet come, it was unſeaſonable at preſent; they being amongſt wicked Neighbours, who would poſſibly ſcoff at them, and oppoſe them, if they ſhould go about it; it was beſt to defer it till another ſeaſon. Thus *Felix*, when *Paul's* diſcourſe of *Judgment to come*, had convinced him ſo far, that he trembled, moſt unhappily denieth him leave to proceed; but defers him to a more *convenient ſeaſon*, which never came that we hear of. Many perſons put off in a Morning Cloſet-Prayer, and Family-Duties, pretending they ſhall be better at leiſure before Noon, and thereby come to neglect them wholly for that part of the day. As *Saul* forbad the Prieſt to aſk Counſel of God, for want of leiſure, *1 Sam.* 14. 19. Others, when Alms are deſired of them, by fit Objects of Charity, will not deny them poſitively, but do it really, by deferring it till another ſeaſon, which the poor Creatures never ſee. Thus the Devil deſtroyeth many Souls, by prevailing with them to delay their Faith and Repentance upon pretence; hereafter will be time

time enough, and then such and such affairs will be over, and then they will be more at leisure to mind them. If he can thus gain time of men, he doubts not but to make them lose thereby an happy eternity; he is pleased well enough to hear men say, they must and will repent, they must and will believe, knowing there are few in Hell who enjoyed the Gospel, but sometime or other said as much; but as long as it is in the future Tense, *I will*, and *I will*, and he can perswade them that they are unseasonable Duties at present; he fears nothing, as knowing himself sure enough of his prey.

To take away this cause of Omissions, I shall answer this excuse.

1. I answer, by confessing (that it may be) that some positive Duties may at some times be unseasonable. The best sort of Food is not always in season. *Solomon* tells us, *There is a time to sow, and a time to reap*, *Eccles.* 3. 1, 2. All the year is not Seed-time, only some part of it. And it must be granted, that every thing is most beautiful in its season, *vers.* 11. then in its season it is most lustrous

and lovely, moſt amiable and comely The grace and glory of an Action conſiſteth much in the right timing of it; therefore it is the praiſe of a good man, *That he bringeth forth his fruit in due ſeaſon*, *Pſal.* 1. And it highly advanceth the Wiſdom of God, that all his Actions are done in the neck, in the joynt, in the fitteſt opportunity poſſible. *When the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent his Son*, *Gal.* 4. 3, 4. He hath out of his goodneſs allotted time for every Duty, *Eccleſ.* 3. 1. *There is a time to every purpoſe*, and Duty for every part of time, ſo that a man can never ſay at this time, I have nothing to do. Nay, God hath allowed a ſeaſon, an opportunity for every thing, wherein, by a concurrence of helps and means, it may be done with moſt eaſe and advantage, *Iſa.* 50. 4.

2. I anſwer, that ſome poſitive Duties are never unſeaſonable. To honour our God, to work out our Salvation, to keep a good Conſcience, to love and believe in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, are always in ſeaſon. Theſe, and ſuch like, ought

ought to be concommitant with every part of our time. *Truſt in the Lord at all time*, Pſal. 62. 8. *I will bleſs thy Name all the day. Bleſſed are they that keep Judgment, and do Righteouſneſs at all times*, *Pſal.* 106. 3. Therefore it is as ſome obſerve, that when *Solomon* mentions a time for ſeveral things, he mentions no time for doing evil, becauſe that muſt never be done; and no time for doing good, becauſe that muſt ever be done. That which ought to have no being, ſhould have no time to be in. That which ought always to be, needs not the mention of any particular time to be in.

3. I anſwer, that no Duties are unſeaſonable, when more good than hurt is done by the preſent performance of them. To reprove our Neighbour offending is a Duty; yet if I knew that my reproving him at this time would make him curſe and ſwear, and ſin more againſt God, I would defer it till another time; but if I thought that I ſhould not have another ſeaſon to do it in, and that preſent Reproof would only put him into a little pet or paſſion at preſent,

but afterwards probably he would conſider it to his advantage, I would embrace the preſent opportunity. He that will omit that Duty till all things concur to his mind for the performance of it, muſt never perform it. There is hardly a ſtep to be taken in our Journey towards Heaven, but there is a block in the way to make us ſtumble at it, or go aſide for it: That if I will obſerve the Wind, I muſt not ſow at all.

4. I anſwer, Take heed that this pretence of the unſeaſonableneſs of Duties be not a device of the fleſh, and a wile of the Devil, to cloak and cover thy unwillingneſs to performance of them. It's eaſie to find ſome ſhift for every ſin; and truly there is none thou canſt live in, but Satan and thy own heart together will help thee to ſufficient grounds for them. Scarce any are gone to Hell without ſome reaſon on their ſide for going thither.

5. I anſwer, that we muſt conſult God and his Word for Wiſdom to know, and faithfulneſs to perform our Duties in their beſt ſeaſons. *The heart of the wiſe diſcerneth both time and judgment*, Eccleſ. 8.

8. 5. A good man that looks to God and his Word with a ſingle eye, deſiring to know what he ſhould do, and when he may do it beſt to the pleaſing of God, ſhall be taught and led by the Spirit of God in the way which he ſhould go in. *The Word of God is perfect*, and directs thee about the fitteſt ſeaſons for thy Duties. It teacheth thee when to mourn, *Joel* 2. 13, 14. *Iſa.* 22. 22, 23. when to rejoyce, *Exod.* 15. 1, 2. *Nehem.* 8. 10. when to pray, and when to ſing, *James* 5. 13. when to reprove, and when to be ſilent, *Amos* 5. 13. when to give, and when to forbear giving, *Prov.* 3. 27. Yet ſtill there will be much need of Chriſtian prudence, and it may be helpful to thee to obſerve ſome general Rules.

1. That a greater good be preferred before a leſſer, and a more weighty Duty always have the precedency of what is leſs weighty. Though a leſſer good, and a leſs weighty Duty muſt be minded in their time and place, yet the greater muſt have the precedency, *Matth.* 6. 33. Publick advantage muſt not be crouded out, and put by for private, nor ſpiritual good give way to temporal. *Shimei*

shew'd his folly, in minding his wealth more than his life. And *Mary*, her wisdom was, improving the present time for her Soul, when *Martha* was troubled about other things.

2. That generally the present time be laid hold on, and the first opportunity for the doing of good. Time is bald behind, and therefore its good to take it by the fore-lock. It's the Mariners wisdom to take the first good Wind that offers it self for his Voyage; and it may be the Merchants policy to take the first Chapman. The Apostle saith, *While ye have time, do good to all, Gal.* 8. 10. implying, that they will not always have it, it is winged and flieth away.

Sometimes I confess it may be prudence (as circumstances may be) when there is a probability of enjoying another season to defer it at present; but usually it is best to take the present, because future time is uncertain, and then it may be said, *A price was in the hand of a Fool, and he wanted an heart.*

3. That if it be evident, that more hurt than good will be done by our present performance of our Duties, we forbear

bear and defer them. For those Duties that do not bind us *ad semper*, God leaves much to the wisdom of the faithful Christian as to the season of performing them.

4. That a certain good at present must be chosen before an uncertain future good, though greater than the former. If I have a price now in my hands to do my self or Neighbour some good, and neglect to improve it; but defer it, hoping hereafter for an opportunity of doing my self and Neighbour more good, this is sinful. I doubt not, but *Felix* sinned in putting *Paul* off till another season, though he had intended to hear him afterwards for his own greater profit, (which he was far enough from) because he must know that his own life, continuance in his Government, and *Paul*'s life were all at the pleasure of another, not at his own.

Reader, if thou art upright with God, what is said will be sufficient; but if out of the deceitfulness of thy heart, thy plea be only a pretence for the total omission of thy Duty; know assuredly, that if thou canst find no season to do

God Service, he will find no season for thy Salvation.

CHAP. XLVI.

A third excuse for sins of Omission. It is but one sin, with the answer to it.

3. A Third excuse which men have for sins of Omission, is, It is but one Duty I omit, and I hope there is no such great danger in that. Though I do not read the Word, yet I pray; though I examine not my own heart, yet I read Scripture, and mind prayer; It is true, I give not to the poor, but I am painful in my Calling, and provident for my Family, as God commandeth me. What hurt can there be, if some one secret Duty (the omission of which cannot be scandalous) should never be performed? Surely, God who knoweth our weak, infirm, nay, wicked and depraved natures cannot expect universal Obedience to his positive or negative Commands. He understands that Perfection is impossible to the humane nature since the Fall; and therefore

fore sent his Son into the World, to take away the sins of it.

To cure the distemper of the brain; for it's a kind of phrensie which makes men argue after this rate; consider,

1. That there is a vast difference between thy being guilty of many sins, and allowing thy self in one sin. Grace may consist with the being of many sins in the same subject, but not with the liking of one sin. As the love of money is the root of all evil, so is the love of Sin the root of all the evil that befals the Sinner. He who knew he could not hinder the inherency of many sins, yet desires and endeavours to prevent the regency of any one Sin, *Psal.* 119. 132. *Order my steps by thy Word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.* Observe, not any iniquity.

2. Consider, that the Omission of one Duty may send thee to Hell, as well as the Omission of many Duties. One Knife, one Sword, one Bullet, one blow may kill a man as well as a thousand. If thou allowest thy self in one Omission, thou art a Servant to this one Sin, (*For his Servant thou art whom thou obeyest,*

est, *Rom.* 6. 16.) and so the Devils Slave, (for he hath thee as fast by this one Chain, as by many,) and consequently an Enemy and Rebel against God, and accordingly shalt suffer eternally. Thy Soul, Friend, is the price of every sin, and when thou allowest thy self in any one, thou dost implicitly, though not expressly, bargain with the Devil thy Master, to sell him thy Soul for the wages of unrighteousness, 1 *King.* 21. 20. One man in Law may keep possession, and keep the right owner out of his Estate. One sin may keep possession for Satan, and hinder Jesus Christ from his Right; I mean from sitting on the Throne, and swaying the Scepter of thy Soul. Wallowing in one puddle defiles the Body, and tumbling in one piece of filthiness defiles the Soul. One piece of ward-Land, though but a quarter of an Acre, makes a man liable to the King, and brings in his whole Estate, though he be worth thousands *per annum*. Therefore, Friend, do not say, it is but one sin, and I may be bold with it; but rather, it is Sin, and so mortal, and I may not allow it. As Christ gave himself

self to redeem thee from all iniquity, *Titus* 2. 14. So do thou give thy self to him in all manner of Duty. How severely have some been punished for one Sin. *Moses*, for not sanctifying the Name of God at one time. *Eli*, for omitting to reprehend his Children, according to their wickedness, which was one Sin. *Aarons* Sons, for not fetching their fire from the Altar (as some judge) were struck dead, *Levit.* 10. 1, 2. If the Righteous be recompenced on the Earth, much more the Transgressor and the Sinner. Take heed, if *Saul's* sparing one *Agag*, lost him his temporal, thy sparing one Sin, lose thee not the eternal Kingdom.

3. This one Sin will not go alone; thou mayst hope when thou hast opened the door for this one Sin to enter, that thou canst presently shut, and keep out its associates, but it is impossible. Sins are sociable, and ever go in company. First, one evil Spirit takes possession of the man, and then seven more worse than himself. As there is a concatenation of Graces, where one goeth all the rest follow, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6, 7, 8. so there is a con-

concatenation of Sins, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 3, 4, 5. They are so linkt one in another, that as in a Chain, the drawing of one link brings with that a second, and that a third, and that a fourth, and all are drawn to the very end of the Chain. When *Dalilah* had enticed and prevailed with *Sampson*, then come the Lords of the *Philistines* and bind him, and put out his eyes, and set him to grind at the Mill, and to make them sport. When one sin by its flatteries hath deceived and possessed thy Soul, then come others more potent and lordly to strengthen Satans hold, and make way for others. Any one sin allowed is a great-bellied Monster, who hath a numerous brood in the Womb of it. It doth insensibly harden the heart, and strongly disposeth it for other Sins; as one wedge makes way for another. Who could have thought that *David*'s idleness should be accompanied with so great and cursed a crew.

He who neglects Morning-Prayer, is hereby disposed to neglect God in his Calling, and to buy and sell, and do all without his counsel. Consider, Friend,

Friend, if thou fall from the top of a Ladder but one round, it will be many to one if thou stop before thou comest to the bottom.

4. This one sin allowed makes thee guilty of all sins. By the breach of one Command thou disowneſt the Authority by which all the Commands are enjoyned, *James* 2. 10. *For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all.* It's true, he doth not break the whole formally; he may be no Thief, no Murderer, *&c.* But,

1. He breaks the whole Law interpretatively. He slights and despiseth the Author of the whole Law. He cannot obey God in any Command, who endeavours not to obey him in every Command; the Apostle subjoyns this reason, for he that said, *Do not commit Adultery*, said also, *Do not kill*; so that if thou commit not Adultery, yet if thou killest, thou art a Transgressor of the Law.

2. He breaks the whole Law collectively, though not distributively. All the Commands are ten words, but one Law. The whole Law is one Copulative or Chain,

Chain, break one link, you disorder and mar all. The whole Body suffers by a wound given to any one part. The Commands are consider'd all together, (not severally) as they make one entire and perfect rule of righteousness, from which whosoever swerveth in regard of any part of it, must needs swerve from the whole.

3. He breaks the whole Law eventually, though not intentionally, in the consequent of his Disobedience to one Command. He is liable to the same Curse with those that break every Command. He is as truly out of favour with God, as if he had kept never a Command. Any one condition not observed, forfeits the whole Lease, be it never so large; and any one Command not obeyed, forfeits the benefits of the Gospel, and subjects the Soul to eternal damnation.

4. He breaks the whole Law habitually, though not actually. The same wicked nature which carrieth him out to break one Command wilfully, would carry him out to break them all, if it were not restrained. This mans heart

breaks

breaks every Command, though his hands be tied, and he is hindred from breaking many of the Commands.

5. He breaks the whole Law by the breach of any one, because he sins against love, and breaks that bond and knot which keeps and fastens the whole Law together, *Rom.* 13. 10. *Qui unū peccavit omnium reus est, peccans contra charitatem, in qua omnia pendent,* Aug. Epist. 29. He that breaks one Command is guilty of all, because he sins against Charity, on which all hang, saith *Austin.* Therefore upon the breach of one, *viz.* That of the Sabbath, God chargeth the *Jews* with the guilt of all, *Exod.* 16. 18.

5. I answer, if it be but one sin thou livest in, but one Duty thou livest in the omission of, the more foolish art thou to lose all for lack of doing one thing more. Though as the young man said, thou hast kept all the Commands from thy youth, yet if, as Christ said to him, thou lackest one thing, truly, as with him, the lack of this one thing will be the loss of all. And what a Fool is he who runs for a Crown, an incorruptible Crown,

to

to run within one ſtep of the Goal, and then to make a ſtop, and thereby to loſe the prize? Is not he an unwiſe man, who layeth a large Foundation; raiſeth up ſtately Floors, is at great coſt in building an Houſe; yet for want of a little more charge about ſome material pillar of the Edifice, ſuffers it all to fall down?

Reader, Conſider it, the omiſſion of one Duty is the amiſſion of all thy Duties. If God loſe but one, thou loſeſt all. And art thou willing to loſe all thy labour, all thy days at *the Labour-in-vain*, and that for want of taking a little more pains, and doing one thing more for thy Soul and Salvation.

One flaw in a Diamond mars all its beauty and brightneſs. One blot in a writing may ſpoil the whole, and render it inſignificant. One poiſonful Herb renders all the good and wholſom Herbs in the pot unprofitable. Therefore do not ſay, It is but one, therefore I may omit it; but rather, it is but one Duty more to all my other Duties, and therefore I will not ſtick at it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVII.

A fifth cause of sins of Omission. The example of others, with the cure of it.

5. ANother cause of sins of Omission, is the example of others. Men are much led by the eye, more than by the ear, and look rather to what their Neighbours do, than to what God speaketh. Though all men are not of one mind in all things, yet most in the places where we live are of a mind about evil, and against good. The whole City of *Sodom* will joyn together in a sin that was against the very light of nature. *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the Cities about them, sinned in like manner. The Diseases of others Souls are far more infectious than the Plague, or any other Disease of their Bodies. The ground why several neglect the Duties God requireth, is, because others neglect them. They see their Neighbours (some of whom are counted (possibly) wise men, and are (it may be) rich men and great men, and others who are

numerous,) to live without God, to omit Prayer and Scripture in their Families, to neglect the instruction of their Children and Servants, and they think they may omit them as safely as others. Nay, they will tell us, such and such men are sober men, and understand themselves well enough, and they think it needless to make so much ado about Family-Duties, and the sanctification of the Sabbath, &c. and our Neighbours generally are of their mind; and why should we be wiser than our Neighbours? O what a ready Scholar is man to learn a wicked Lesson that is set him by others! If *Corah* conspire against God, he shall quickly have some hundreds to joyn with him in his rebellion. They move swiftly towards the dead Sea of destruction, who are carried thitherward by the tide of Nature, and blown powerfully with the wind of Example.

The patterns of them who are Persons of Quality and Estate, have a strange prevalency upon the inferior sort, and are often the Looking-glasses by which they dress themselves. Ordinary men look on their Superiors, especially

cially if they be not ſcandalous, as men of wiſdom (whether they be ſuch or no) and fit to guide and govern others, and ſo judge they cannot err much, if they follow their ſteps. The Phariſees plead this for the Omiſſion of the great Goſpel-Duty, *Joh.* 7: 48. *Have any of the Rulers of the Phariſees believed on him?* Will ye be wiſer than they? Do you think that if Faith in this Son of man (as he calls himſelf) were a Duty, they would neglect it; or if he were the true Meſſiah, ſuch underſtanding men as they would not know it?

One great man, as a great Letter in an Indenture (though it ſignifie no more than another ſmall one) hath many ſmall ones following him. The *Herodians* (ſome think) were ſo called from their conforming to *Herod* in their Religion. And it's judged the *Melchites*, who lived in the Eaſt, were ſo called from *Melech*, *i. e.* of the Kings Religion. The works of great men are more powerful with the ordinary ſort, than the the Will and Word of the great God. Again, the example of the multitude is very forcible. Men are carried down

with the stream both easily and strongly. It is as common to do as the most do in irreligious, as in natural actions. We think our selves in greatest safety, when we are with the most numerous Party. To be singular, is lookt upon as ridiculous; and those who are so, are counted proud, conceited, precisians. Men choose rather to be sociable in sin, than singular in sanctity, and to do as the most do, than as the best do. The fewness of Christ's Followers was a stumbling-block to his Enemies, and an offence to his Friends.

To cure this, *Reader*, consider:

1. That no patterns of any men are valid against the Precepts of God. The Precepts of God are like himself, of certain purity and eternal verity; but the patterns of men are like themselves, vain and variable. Our business is not to look to what men do, but to what God speaketh. It is highly derogatory to the supream Being to make the examples of men, and not his Commands the rule of our lives. The examples of Murderers, Thieves, Drunkards, Swearers, are of as much force against the good and whol-

wholſome Law of a Prince, as the irreligious examples of any men are againſt the holy and righteous Laws of God. A Judge would deride the Malefactors Plea, that ſhould ſay, It is true, I have broke the Kings Laws, but have done no more than ſuch an Eſquire, or Knight, or Lord; I have but imitated them therein: Or that ſhould ſay, I was guilty of ſuch Treaſons, but I joyn'd with many other Traytors; I had good ſtore of company with me. And doſt thou think, *Reader*, the Judge of Quick and Dead, when he ſhall arraign thee for thine unchangeable Eſtate, and demand of thee why thou omitteddſt the Duties he enjoyn'd thee, will accept thy Plea, when thou ſhalt ſay, It is true, Lord, I did live without Scripture, or Prayer in my Family; but ſuch and ſuch great men, who lived near me, did ſo as well as I; I wrot after their Copies, and thought it would be well enough to do as they did; or when thou ſhalt ſay, Lord, though I neglected thy Worſhip and Service, I followed therein almoſt all the Town and Pariſh where I lived, and I judged it beſt to imitate the moſt.

Canſt thou imagine that ſuch a ſilly ſimple excuſe will bear any weight? Thou wilt not take ſuch a pitiful Plea from any Child or Servant in thy Family. If thy Child, when reproved by thee for Drunkenneſs, or Thieving, or Diſobeying thy Commands, ſhould excuſe himſelf, and ſay, Sir, other mens Sons are as bad as I, ſuch a Gentleman's Sons are worſe; the Children of very many meet and joyn with me in all my drinking, ſtealing, and debauched courſes. How ill would ſuch an anſwer ſound in thine ears? Or what wouldſt thou think, if thy Servant, inſtead of doing the work appointed him, ſhould run from Ale-houſe to Ale-houſe, and ſpend his time in Carding and Dicing, and then excuſe it to thee, that he did as others did; there were many beſide himſelf, and ſome of Quality, who were examples to him. Conſider how poor, how pitiful, how irrational a Plea it is to excuſe thy Diſobedience to God, by thy imitation of irreligious men; and do not think that the great God will take that excuſe from thee which thou wilt not from a Child or Servant. Surely

there

there is a little more difference between the boundleſs bleſſed God, and thee a poor Worm, than there is between thee and any Son or Servant.

2. Conſider, If thou wilt follow others (be they great or many) in ſin, thou ſhalt alſo follow them in intollerable and eternal Sufferings. *The ways of ſuch tend to death, and their ſteps take hold of Hell.* And if thou wilt walk in their ways, and tread in their ſteps, thou canſt not avoid their end, *Rev.* 18. 4. *Come out from among her my people, and be not partakers of her Sins, that ye receive not her Plagues.* He that catcheth the Plague of another, catcheth all the pain and weakneſs, and ill effects of ſuch a Diſeaſe. Do not think to feed on wicked mens Dainties, to live their lazy ſenſual lives, and not to pay their reckoning. *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the Cities about them, went a whoring after ſtrange Fleſh; here they joyn in ſinning, but are they ſeparated in ſufferings: truly no: *Are ſet forth for an example, ſuffering the vengeance of eternal fire, Jude, verſ.* 7. If they unite in wicked-

ness, they shall be united in woe. God will bind them up together as Tares for the fire.

I know, *Reader*, thou wouldst not be willing to dwell for ever with, and fare for ever as wicked great men shall. *Tophet is prepared of old: for the King it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it*, Isa. 30. ult. And why then wilt thou do as they do, and resemble them now in time. It is unavoidable. Live as they do here, and live as they do for ever. Again, thou art unquestionably loth to be with, and suffer as the most shall to eternity. *At the great day the World*, (*i.e.* the far greater part of it,) *shall be condemned*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. When they shall be arraigned for their endless Estates, they shall be cast and condemned to the company, and curses, and torments of the Devils for ever and ever; and if thou wouldst not die their Deaths, or partake of their unchangeable Conditions, why wilt thou live their lives, and walk in their wicked ways.

3. Con-

3. Conſider of all patterns, theſe two, The greateſt or richeſt, and the multitude, are moſt unfit for thy imitation. Becauſe of all men, theſe uſually are the worſt men, and do leaſt imitate Chriſt. For great men, how few are there who are good; Grace and Greatneſs are happy and lovely, but rare Conjunctions. *Solomon* tells us, *That Wiſdom is good with an Inheritance*, Eccleſ. 7. 11. But where ſhall we find Wiſdom and Wealth, Righteouſneſs and Riches together. Great and rich men have their Farms and Merchandizing, and Honours and Pleaſures, and other things to look after than their Souls and Salvation. *How hardly*, ſaith our Saviour, *ſhall a rich man enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* It may well be hard for him, who turns the cords of Love, and bands of Kindneſs into fewel, to his luſts and weapons of unrighteouſneſs. Bleſſed be God there are ſome great men who walk religiouſly, but truly they are very few. *Brethren, ye know your calling, not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the World,*

World, &c. 1 *Cor.* 1. 26, 27, Not many wise, or mighty, or noble are chosen or called of God. *But God hath chosen the poor of the World rich in Faith, and Heirs of a Kingdom*, James 2. 5. The poor are evangelized, transformed into the heavenly spiritual Nature of the Gospel. The Poor receive the Gospel, the Rich receive the World, and the things of the World. The Poor having little Estate in the World, look after an Estate in the Covenant; but the Rich having this Worlds Goods, are satisfied, and desire no more. Now, *Reader*, wilt thou follow them that are wholly taken up with fleshly fading Pleasures and Riches, and cast off all care of their eternal condition? Are they fit to be thy Guides, who bid defiance to God, and fight against him with his own Mercies, and throw off all regard and care what shall become of them for ever and ever?

Again, for the giddy-headed multitude, how unfit are they to be thy examples. Most are usually the worst. Of all Creatures, the basest and vilest are ever most numerous, as Flies and Vermine.

mine. How few Jewels to Pebbles or common ſtones. The weaker part are more than the wiſer. *The whole World lieth in wickedneſs*, as a brute in his filth, 1 *Joh.* 5. 19. and are ſuch fit to be followed? *The whole Earth wandreth after the Beaſt*, Rev. 17. *and is deceived by the Devil*, Rev. 12. 9. And are ſuch poor tame Slaves to a cruel Devil, who hates them and thee perfectly, good examples for thee to imitate? Doſt thou not conſider what truth ſpeaketh, *Broad is the way, and wide is the gate that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be who go therein*, Matth. 7. 14. Stop a little, and ponder it. Wilt thou go after them, who go in the broad way to deſtruction?

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